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CHRIST WOUNDED

IN

THE HOUSE OF HIS FRIENDS.

A BRIEF REVIEW

OF SOME

PROCEEDINGS IN DIFFERENT COURTS

OF

The Presbyterian Church of Canada.

SECOND EDITION,

WITH SOME ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS.

BY A. FERRIER, D. D., CALEDONIA, C. W.

After the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers. Acts xxiv. 14.

BRANTFORD:

PRINTED AT THE HERALD OFFICE, COLBORNE STREET.

1851.

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

In compliance with the wishes of brethren and friends, a new Edition of this Pamphlet is herewith issued. So far as it relates to ourselves we could willingly have declined giving further publicity to ecclesiastical proceedings in the *Free* Church, so disgraceful to those who were their actors, but from which it is hoped the Supreme Court of that Church will exonorate themselves when they next meet, so as to leave us no ground to reproach the whole denomination for the heartless, unhallowed, and tyrannical doings of a few individuals. We have always respected, and wish to continue to respect the body at large, for the sacrifices and exertions they have made for conscience' sake; and for many of the ministers we shall continue to cherish a sincere regard. But this will not prevent us from stigmatizing the intolerance of the Caledonia Commission; and of the whole Synod, in whose name they acted, should they not condemn its deliverance, and do every thing in their power to make reparation to us and our congregation for the insults and injuries which have been so recklessly and sacrilegiously committed.

Since the first edition was published almost nothing has transpired deserving of notice. So far from retracting anything in the pamphlet, additions might be made to it, and confirming evidences to the truth of the shameful actings it details might be adduced. The folly and injustice of the Courts in attempting to deal with us, and bring us to their antiquated views, on points where our liberty had been conceded by themselves,—the impostures practised by the faction, and the connivance at these, and encouragements to slander and strife, by "members of Presbytery,"—and the madness and tyranny of the commission, all remain unanswered, and unanswerable, and might be more fully exposed.

The only effort at defence has been in some ephemeral notices in Newspapers, and has chiefly turned on an assertion, without the shadow of proof, that no our voluntary principles, but our views on the Headship of Christ over the nations, have occasioned our separation from the Presbyterian Church of Canada. This was attempted first by an anonymous writer in the Hamilton *Gazette*, with much inconsistency, styling himself "a Free Church Voluntary," but evidently meddling with "things too high for him." Next appeared the letter of the Rev. Mr. Stark, in the Dundas *Warder*, where the same very false idea is lamely advocated, and to which sufficient replies have been given. The only other attack of which we have heard was by Dr. Burns, who had the pusillanimous effrontery to revisit Caledonia on the 21st of January, and at a public meeting (where he knew none would oppose him,) to burst out with the same assertion, in doing which, so far as we understand, he did little more than reiterate his "old song" of false

hood and slander, given in the *mare magnum* controversy, and afterwards in his calumnious speech at the Synod of 1848. We do not think it necessary to say anything in reply to what we did not hear. But although his eloquence may deceive some to whom the subject is new, or to whom he is himself a stranger, yet, so far as we learn, his harangue consisted either in gratuitous and scurrilous assertion, or in fighting for truths which have never been denied. Amidst many excellencies of character, and high attainments, which command respect, Dr. Burns seems to have the same indurable inconsistencies and defects which, twenty-four years ago, led a revered and eminent minister* in a neighbouring colony, to employ, with merited severity, the language which follows, and which seems to be applicable still:—"You appear to me to be much better acquainted with the rules of contraries, than with the rules of logic." "What am I to think of you, and what is the public to think? Is it that you have no regard for truth? or that you are misled by a bustling disposition, which mistakes consequence for correctness, and which, whilst it affects to regulate the religion of remote countries, cannot attend to the plainest statements." "The gospel sanctions not the crooked policy of the world, and if you employ it for its propagation you will 'spend your strength for nought and in vain.' Where a straightforward course would have raised you to honour, with your present measures you will be sure to meet shame."

We know that not a few of the ministers of the Free Church have expressed surprise and regret that the Commission proceeded as they did; and we even hope that some of them will have the candour and courage at the next Synod to express their sentiments. But no manly attempt has been made, or can be made, to justify such conduct. Our statements are all true, and cannot be disproved by their actors. They may feel sore under the description of them, and try to explain them away. They know, however, as well as ourselves, that the truth, and nothing but the truth, although not the whole truth, is told: and we believe we have a witness in the consciences of some of them, to the scriptural character of our sentiments, and in all of them, to "the violent perversion of justice" with which they are chargeable. But we freely forgive them, and are even thankful that they were made the instruments of our emancipation from a Church given to slander. They have separated us from some friends, but have opened the door for others. "They thought evil against us, but the Lord meant it unto good."

Their views on the headship of Christ over the nations, if they would condescend to bring them fully out, are not in the Standards at all; and they are as absurd as they are unscriptural: and by the national recognition of which they speak so much, as has been well remarked, in answer to Mr. Stark, "they mean nothing else than the assertion of it being the duty of the magistrate to endow the Church." Again, in the other answer to the same letter, it is said:—"It ill becomes Mr. Stark, or any of his brethren, to practise deception, and to substitute the gross doctrine of the magistrate's headship, as presented in the Confession of Faith, for the glorious doctrine of the Redeemer's headship over his Church, and over the whole world (of course over all nations,) as held by Dr. Ferrier and the United Presbyterian Church, both as taught in the Standards, and as it is fully and luminously exhibited in the Word of God."

Our views of the headship of Christ being thus, not only those of the Standards but those of the Scriptures, no minister of the Free Church, professing to hold these Westminster Standards entire, can consistently reject them. The errors on this doctrine are not with us, but with the Free Church. It is only where they twist the doctrine of Christ's headship over the nations, so as to advocate civil interference with religion, and the right and power of the magistrate to endow the Church, that we dissent from their views. They may call themselves Voluntaries, and speak of opposition to endowments; but it is an empty boast. For to endowments, in themselves considered, they have officially declared that they have no objections; and we know that many of them "would take them to-morrow."

* The Rev. Dr. McCulloch, of Pictou, Nova Scotia.

if the government would recognise them, and none besides, (as they seem complaisantly to view themselves) as the only true Church.

The subject of Christ's headship over the nations we have handled at considerable length in our first pamphlet; and to the views presented there we adhere. We believe they are the same, with those of our brethren of the United Presbyterian Church, which Dr. Burns and some of his friends so obstinately and shamefully persist in misrepresenting. Receiving the Standards entire, as the Free Church professes to do, it never occurred to us that we could differ on this doctrine; nor did we know of any difference till eight months after we joined them, when Dr. Burns preached the Synod sermon of which we expressed our disapprobation in the open court, stating that it contained, amidst much excellent matter, sentiments in our view consistent neither with Christ's headship over the Church, nor over the nations: and at the same meeting of Synod we stated generally the very views of Christ's headship which we afterwards published. This subject was never touched by the Presbytery at the time of our admission, or if it had it is likely we would have been as plain with them as with the Synod. The views we hold on this subject were taught in the Divinity Hall at Edinburgh, under Dr. Paxton, whose orthodoxy will not be questioned by the Free Church, and who is by some of her ministers in Canada, as well as by those of the United Presbyterian Church, justly venerated.

Mr. Stark tries to make much of alleged "conferences and conversations" at our admission, and of himself and others being appointed to converse on the subject of Christ's headship. It is all misrepresentation. We had no interview with any Committee on that occasion: and with the Presbytery at large we had only one meeting, and one conversation for perhaps two hours, when, without adjournment, we were unanimously and cordially received. The subjects of conversation were simply the Morisonian and the Voluntary controversies,—on the former of which we agreed with them, and on the latter we differed. The conversation on this second subject, as we well remember, was chiefly about men in their collective capacities, being under similar obligations to God as when considered individually,—about which we differed nothing till, as we thought, they appeared to press some notions implying, or seeming to imply, a legislative interference of the civil magistrate with the christian church, when we plainly intimated our dissent from all such views, and our exception to the Confession of Faith where they are implied: and, as stated in the preface to the Tower of Babel, declared that "if the Presbytery could not receive us as we were, and had been for nearly thirty years, we must be contented to remain without." It was this very declaration of ours that put a stop to the conversation, and brought on the vote by which we were admitted: and soon afterwards we were told, on unquestionable authority, that some of the ministers of the Presbytery had said, to some brethren of the United Presbyterian Church, that we had not given in to them in one iota from the views held by the Church with which we were originally connected. This, however, was when union was negotiating, and when it was expected it would soon take place: and perhaps it was said with a view to indicate a readiness or anxiety to accomplish union with the United Presbyterian Church.

But after all what are our views of Christ's headship over the nations, to which the Free Church can object? "We are not denying the supremacy of Christ over the whole world: we are not denying that the affairs of nations, whether sacred or secular, are under his control and direction, and that he overrules and manages them for the interests of his Church: nor are we wishing to set nations free from the obligations which all men in them are under to acknowledge and embrace Christ for salvation, and to conduct their duties of whatever kind in subservience to his glory." Such is our language in the very book where our errors are said to be contained. But what more than what we have now quoted can be said, or could be wished, by the Free Church? Nothing except that they would wish us to say,—"The magistrate may endow the Church." This is "the bone of contention." Opposition to this is our only error,—an error, surely, "on virtue's side,"—an error only according to the Free Church; but, according to every principle of justice and christianity, a solemn scriptural truth. If we

have published pernicious errors besides, as they say we have, let them, as honest men, as honourable judges, as genuine followers of Christ, point them out.

Mr. Stark, it has been said, in Dr. McPherson's reply, "having entered, with much hesitation, on the field of strife, is determined to make the most of it by encountering not Dr. Ferrier alone, but the whole host of Voluntaries, like Haman the Agagite, who thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone, but sought to destroy all the Jews throughout the kingdom, even the people of Mordecai." He presents a series of charges against the United Presbyterian Church at large, and says, that these are points on which the Free Church are not satisfied with our views and those of our brethren. These, it has been said, "are slanderous misrepresentations of the principles of the United Presbyterian Church," and we hope, as is hinted, they will afterwards be refuted. So far as they are referred to us, we know of nothing we have said or published which can support the accusations. Five different topics are mentioned, on each of which, in order to prove them inapplicable, we shall take the liberty to quote from printed documents of our own.

I. The duty of the civil magistrate under the christian dispensation.

"If the magistrate be a christian he will have new light, new motives, and new ends, in the discharge of his civil duties, and especially he will seek thereby to glorify God, as well as to do good to men."

II. The magistrate taking God's word for his rule and guide in legislation.

"All the public affairs of nations should be conducted according to God's will, and under the direction, so far as applicable, of God's word. The duties of nations and rulers must always coincide with the dictates of reason and the principles of scripture. If they are not pointed out in God's word in express language, yet still the grand scriptural principles of truth and righteousness, and a regard to the glory of God and the good of men, should regulate and stimulate every national action."

III. The civil legislation for the Sabbath.

"The magistrate is bound by the moral law, to which the observance of the Sabbath belongs. He is bound by this precept to keep the Sabbath spiritually as a christian, and in this to be a pattern to others: and so far as becoming external tranquillity and order are necessary, and their enforcement can be considered as included in his civil duties, he should consider himself bound by this precept to exercise his authority in preventing the Sabbath from being openly desecrated."

IV. Providing religious instruction for the young.

"Closely connected with every seminary for liberal education, if not incorporated with it, there should be provision for the religious improvement of the students, and for administering to them an acquaintance with christianity, which is of heavenly origin, character, and tendency, and the grand end of which is to fit us for that world where the human faculties, vastly invigorated, shall have exhaustless scope for exercise. The teachers and professors in such Institutions should not only be men of literary and scientific attainments, but of piety and zeal; and it should be considered an important part of their duty, by their example and precept, to promote the interests of divine truth. Occasionally it may be expedient for them to deal in private with the youth committed to their care, and they should do so not only with enlightened wisdom, but with scrupulous fidelity. Let me only add, that as all human agency for the improvement of men and manners, and for the advancement of the interests of solid and practical knowledge, will be vain without the divine blessing, so it must be the duty of all concerned in any institution for education, whether as preceptors or disciples, whether as patrons, benefactors, parents, guardians, or friends, to seek on every effort that is made, the enriching blessing of God. And as all learning would be vain without the knowledge of God, "whom to know is eternal life," as all wisdom is folly without that wisdom which cometh down from above, as all philosophy is destitute of its highest charms which does not elevate the mind, and turn the heart to God, so let us seek that christianity may be entwined in all our deliberations and measures and

movements, and that the end of all our plans, and endeavours, and attainments, may be glory to God."

And V. The duty of the magistrate to pray for God's blessing on their administration.

"The magistrate as a christian, if such he be, can do much: and the very fact of his being a magistrate will vastly increase his influence as a christian by his counsel, prayers, and example. He will thus become in the scripture sense,—a nursing father to the Church. We shall applaud the magistrate although he somewhat outstep the precise line of civil prerogative, and add his counsel, his prayers, and his general influence as a christian, to the enforcement of civil laws."

Having made these remarks and quotations, we ask again where are our sentiments on the headship of Christ, or any other point, "directly contrary to the word of God, and highly pernicious in their character and tendency," on which the reckless commission founded their anomalous and tyrannical procedure?

To this edition a few additional documents are given in Notes. We direct the attention of readers in particular to the resolutions on Government grants, and our reasons of dissent from them, in which the whole stir began; and also to the honourable example to others, presented by the Rev. Thomas Dickson, Preacher of the Gospel, in withdrawing from a Church where scriptural principles are condemned, and where worse than jesuitical craft and oppression are practised.

In sending forth this edition we humbly and earnestly implore the divine blessing on its use. To those whom it reproves may it be "an excellent oil which shall not break their head:" and may it happily excite those who are open to light, and those who have received "the truth as in Jesus," to "contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

A. F

Caledonia, 1st April, 1851.

CHRIST WOUNDED in the HOUSE of HIS FRIENDS.

And one shall say unto the him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.—*Zechariah XIII.* 6.

Different views, on which we do not enter, have been suggested, as intended, by the Spirit of Inspiration, in this passage. We do not insist that it directly refers to Christ, although, as an accommodation of Scripture language, its truth as stated by us on the title, is indisputable. Christ came to His own, and His own received Him not. Neither did His brethren believe on Him. One of His disciples denied, and another betrayed Him. On one memorable occasion they all forsook Him and fled. We read, too, on a particular exhibition of truth being made by Him, (humbling, indeed, to human pride though honouring to God) that from that time many went back and walked no more with Jesus. In these and other instances Christ might literally be said to be wounded in the house of His friends.

But in subsequent ages, the sentiment has often found illustration in the imperfections and backslidings of Christians, which have brought dishonour on religion; and even when seeking to serve and glorify Christ, His Ministers have sometimes, by ignorance and prejudices, been the means of retarding His cause;—and hence Christ has been wounded in the house of his friends.

These thoughts have occurred in connexion with a certain course of procedure, by the Presbyterian Church of Canada, which must ever be a stain upon its early history, and which, believing its representatives to be sincerely devoted to the cause of true religion, must be acknowledged and deplored as a wounding of Christ in the house of his friends. For friends to Christ doubtless the Ministers of this Church are—most zealous and genuine friends—although it is to be feared that in matters to be noticed, they have not been honoured to serve his cause with as much wisdom as sincerity.

It was in 1845, a year after this Church was first constituted, that we were brought into contact with it. We did not join it rashly, nor till every reasonable assurance had been reiterated of entire forbearance on all circumstantial points, and of their having no hesitation about receiving us, although we held all the views, as we stated to them, of the United Presbyterian Church, and, so far as we saw, would continue to hold them; nay, till the brethren of the Presbyterian Church declared themselves open to light on all points, and their earnest desire to conform in all things to the principles of the word of God. We had just come from the United States, where we had been connected with the Old School General Assembly, and the professions of our friends of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, were so similar to the views of the large and enlightened Denomination we had left, that they gained, perhaps unduly, on our confidence. They assured us that their new Denomination was not fully organized, but that it was their intention to consolidate it on the most liberal principles, to make it a Presbyterian Church for the Province, having no necessary connexion with Foreign Churches, not even with the Free Church of Scotland, whose name, on that account, they refused; but that, entirely independent of them all, their association was to be based on such general terms of communion as that not only we, originally of the United Secession Church of Scotland, and of voluntary senti-

ments, but as that all evangelical denominations of Presbyterians, without compromising their peculiar views, might, in the exercise of Christian forbearance, have freedom to unite with them.

These professions, made by those who knew well our sentiments, were gratifying and enticing. A Presbyterian Denomination to be thus constituted was a noble object of contemplation, and exactly what Canada needed, for every where, in the Province, it was found that Christians, especially Presbyterian Christians, from all denominations of the fatherlands, harmoniously commingled, and, merging their little differences, co-operated with zeal to sustain a regular dispensation of gospel ordinances, thus presenting a pattern which their Ministers would do well to imitate.* It was not the people but the Ministers who had hitherto stood aloof, and contended about sectarian peculiarities. A Christian Church organized in the manner proposed, was therefore likely to present an attractive aspect, and to bid fair to be the centre of union among Evangelical Presbyterians. At all events, as the United Secession never made a renunciation of the Establishment principle a term of communion; these professions were sufficient to convince us that union between the Presbyterian and United Presbyterian Churches might very soon be accomplished.

Alas, in whom are we to place confidence if the Ministers of Religion can fawn and flatter to make proselytes to their cause, and if, with fair professions of liberality, they are, it may be unknown to themselves, under the baneful influence of a proud and unconquerable sectarian spirit! Alas how often in such circumstances is the Saviour wounded in the house of his friends!

Having been Inducted at Caledonia in April 1846, taking exception to the passages in the Confession of Faith, which teach, or may be supposed to teach, compulsory and persecuting principles in Religion, it was not long till we began to fear that we were not likely to be altogether comfortable with our new brethren, that they were far behind the age, and unprepared to follow an enlightened course of ecclesiastical policy, and, in fact, that they were in danger of proceeding in a narrow and selfish course, and enshrining themselves in all the sectarian peculiarities which they had professed their determination to renounce.

In the month of June, 1846, the Synod was opened at Hamilton with a Sermon by Dr. Burns, in which, in a manner the most indecent and outrageous, he made slanderous and gratuitous charges against the United Presbyterian Church, grossly misrepresenting their sentiments, when several of their Ministers, and not a few of their Members, had come with conciliatory feelings to hear him. His railing language, of unmeasured severity, was not taken notice of by the Synod. They silently permitted Christ to be wounded in the house of His friends.—We now felt reproved and ashamed in being united to such a Church, and we acknowledge that this blunt and uncharitable attack, never challenged by any but ourselves, produced a distaste to the denomination which we have not yet got over, and made us wish that Providence had so ordered it that we had never connected ourselves with such a body.

At this Synod too, on the suggestion of the same Minister, a minute was passed, when the report of the Union Committee was given in, which, although as harmless as it was unnecessary, went on the suppo-

* It is much to be regretted that whilst the people are thus intermingled the ministers stand aloof and contend about the sectarian peculiarities by which their friends at home are respectively distinguished. Is it not evident that the more this is done they are the less the correct representatives of their people, and thus create and augment an unseemly discrepancy between their courts and congregations? Without union in this country, the Christian people, who are far before their Ministers in Christian forbearance and charity, will never have a proper representation in the ecclesiastical courts.

sition that some very formidable error existed in the other body, of which it was necessary they should beware, and was intended to reflect on the United Presbyterian Church. This minute bore that "the Synod resolve to record their conviction of the vast importance of the principle that men in their national as well as their individual capacity are bound to honour God, and to regulate their proceedings by the rules of His Word, and that Christ is King of nations, as well as Head of the Church." Of this minute, to which it is believed every Minister of the United Presbyterian Church would subscribe, its author made an unnecessary noise afterwards, insinuating that if it had not gone amissing, but been produced at a particular time, it would have put a stop to all further negociations for union, as it would be rejected by the United Presbyterian Church; and its author also expressed his astonishment that we should have voted for it. Since such were his views, one would think it had been introduced for the purpose of creating difficulty, or producing strife. But it only shows the ignorance of the Presbyterian Church, at that time of the sentiments of the United Presbyterian Church, for it exhibits doctrine in which the two Churches perfectly coincide, and shews how easy it would be to keep by such general principles as to preserve harmony and secure union.

Finding that this general statement was insufficient to prevent the Union, as it is now believed the zealots of the Establishment principle wished, it has been supposed that further steps were contrived to arrest the negotiations, or to render them nugatory. It was long, indeed, before the nature and position of these negotiations in Committee were publicly known. They seem to have been purposely concealed, like heathen mysteries, from the knowledge of the people, who were kept in wonderment about what was going on, and in anxiety and suspense about the results.*

The *Mare Magnum* controversy, which began in September, 1847, and ended in May, 1848, brought the difference between the Presbyterian and United Presbyterian Churches in some measure before the public; and disclosed enough of the spirit of some who hold the principle of an establishment to produce the conviction that they alone are the sectarians, and that they alone prevent the union by persisting in misrepresentation and slander, whereby they deceive even many of their own brethren who are favourably disposed, and whereby they wound Christ in the house of His friends. Yes, it was at the laying of the foundation-stone of Knox's Church, Toronto, that the great out-breaking was made, altogether out of place, uncalled for, and uncharitable, as the Rev. Mr. Rintoul remarked; yet by this the public soon got some insight into the character of the negociations for union. This *Mare Magnum* controversy did no honour to the Presbyterian Church. It brought out some ugly features of calumny which are current among the friends of the Establishment Principle, and which they have neither the manliness to attempt to prove, nor the honesty to retract; and which, with all the ingenuity and plausibility they are able to command, they seem to delight to circulate. The intelligent public know how to estimate these misrepresentations, as well as the cause which requires or employs them for its support.

* In 1849 an account of the proceedings of the Committees on Union was published by order of the United Presbyterian Synod which, altho' from courtesy to the other Synod, was limited to the publication of the minutes, conveys much valuable information. The Presbyterian Synod resolved at their meeting in 1848 to publish "the papers of their own committee with such explanations as might appear necessary:" but, so far as we know, this was never done, which we regret, as it seems to indicate a fear on their part of telling the world plainly what their principles really are. Were they to be more explicit we trust it would be seen that there is not so much of error in their views as their usually vague statements sometimes lead us to suspect. We hold none of the errors they impute to us, and wish they would desist from their uncharitable inferences. It would be well that they plainly represented their own principles, and ceased to make misrepresentations of ours. We would say to them, "Physician heal thyself." "First cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

This controversy, with all its ungraciousness and absurdity, with all its railing accusations, was conducted on the Establishment side entirely by Dr. Burns. The public know that by a course of blustering letters, thinking to expose the Voluntaries, he exposed himself to ridicule, if not to censure. Thinking to cry down and extirpate their principles, he was but the instrument of bringing them into greater publicity. Nothing could be more outrageous than the reveries of Dr. Burns in this matter. He knows, or ought to know, that his accusations are inapplicable, but by the flexibility of his imagination he brings himself to assert, and in some instances to make others believe, that there is a vast and momentous difference between the principles of the Presbyterian and United Presbyterian Churches, and at the same time he occasionally narrows it into next to nothing, or, as he expresses it, into the compass of "a nut shell."

The difference between the Churches is simply on the power of the civil magistrate in matters of religion. The Presbyterian Church saying that legislative interference is lawful, and the United Presbyterian Church saying that it is not lawful.

Especially does the Presbyterian Church believe it to be lawful, in some circumstances, for the civil magistrate to endow the Church, whereas the United Presbyterian Church believes that in no circumstances can this be lawful. Now, as this is never likely to become a practical question in this country—as every day proves that it will soon be hopeless in this Province to think of an endowed church—every unprejudiced christian must admit that it is a difference which ought never to keep evangelical Presbyterians asunder for a day. This should have been made a matter of mutual forbearance at the very outset of intercourse between the committees. This omission was sounding the trumpet of war at once, and not like "men who had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do." But whose fault is it that this theoretical sentiment should prevent union? Not that of the United Presbyterian Church, for they forbear with all among themselves who hold the principle of an establishment, and are willing to forbear with all other Christians who only differ from them in this. The fault lies entirely with the Presbyterian Church, which, by a course of sophistry and calumny has been for years endeavouring to make it believed that this difference is a mighty matter, having ramifications and references of essential moment to the interests of religion. In what manner and with what success this has been done, will appear as we proceed, but we hold that these are all groundless inferences, and that the real difference between the Churches is resolvable into the civil establishment principle alone.

At length the synopsis of points on which difference of opinion had been found was published in some of the periodicals; and from this it appeared that after two or three years correspondence, the committees had done nothing to promote union, but much to prevent it. It has eight articles, but they all bear on the Establishment principle; so that after all, this is the only point of difference between the Churches. A union might be concluded at once by making this Establishment principle a matter of mutual forbearance. But so it is, there are those who are so much under the influence of deadly prejudice that this principle is cherished by them as one of essential moment.

It was thought by some, that at the Synod of 1848, Dr. Burns would have been called to account for the slanderous statements he had made, at least, that the Synod by some minute or resolution would shelter themselves from all blame as having sympathized with the slanderer, but there was never a word on the subject. Not a single expression of regret was uttered, and although Dr. Burns' officiousness alone had given a dash to the prospects of union, yet the Synod so far from giving any

check to such imprudency were ready to allow a repetition of all the unseemly and abusive statements. They hailed an overture which sprung out of the *Mare Magnum* controversy for adherence to the standards, and by their deliberations and decisions on two other causes which came before them, in both of which it seemed to be their only aim to fortify the Establishment Principle, they did all in their power to put an end to further negotiations for union; saying virtually to their brethren —'Here are our sentiments on the disputed points, if you can come over to these, which we know you cannot, we shall fraternize with you, if not, there is no use for discussing further the desirableness and practicability of union.'

The two causes referred to, were, The question about government grants, and the Report of the Union Committee. As the former of these causes seemed to involve points that would belong to the latter, it was thought by several wise, prudent, and conciliatory members of Court, that before they proceeded to give their sentiments about government grants, they should hear the report of the Union Committee, and give their deliverance thereon. This, however, was overruled, for what reason we know not; but it was more and more felt, in the progress of the discussion about these grants of government, that the Synod erred in the arrangement, for it was in danger of committing itself on points which would be barriers to union with the United Presbyterian Church. It appeared to us a most injudicious thing, and a want of proper courtesy, to begin with this question, as that was likely to commit the Synod on the other, or to shut them up from an unfettered consideration of it. If there was any chance of union, or any great wish for it, it might have been seen that a rash deliverance about Government grants, might possibly render it impracticable. And so it turned out, for, in disposing of this question, instead of simply declaring that it was unseasonable to receive these grants, which (without approving or disapproving of the Establishment principle) would have given universal satisfaction, and left the door open for union, and even made union easy, they accompanied a deliverance of the same amount with a series of resolutions on the Establishment principle,* and, afterwards, even elevated some points contained

* To all who reject the Establishment possibly these resolutions will appear to be exceedingly foolish, as well as contradictory and unwarranted. The following is their tenor:—

1. "That this Synod holds unchanged the principle which has heretofore formed one distinguishing part of its testimony for Christ as King of nations, viz:, that it is the duty of civil rulers as such, as being under law to Christ, not only to protect, but to countenance and favour the Church.

2. "That it is the opinion of the Synod that the question of endowments, or in other words the question whether the civil magistrate ought, in shewing countenance and favour to the Church, to appropriate a portion of the public funds for its support, is one of subordinate importance; and on which differences of opinion may exist among those who are, nevertheless, sound as to all that is essential in the doctrine of Christ's Headship over the nations.

3. "That the endowment of the Church by the civil magistrate is held to be lawful; but that the question as to the duty, at any given time, of granting such endowment on the part of the civil magistrate, or of its acceptance on the part of the Church, ought to be determined on the grounds of Christian expediency.

4. "That, however justifiable the retention of endowments received under different circumstances may be, the Synod, looking to the conduct of the government of this country in now offering endowments to religious bodies without reference to the distinction between truth and error, to the divisions and jealousies which the acceptance of endowments in present circumstances would occasion, to the strong feeling which prevails throughout the Church—that their acceptance would tend to diminish the usefulness of ministers and the liberality of the people in contributing to the support of the gospel, and to the evil influence which an irreligious government might exert through the dependence upon the State, which such endowments would occasion,—the Synod is of opinion that it would be deeply injurious to the interests of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, and to the cause of the Redeemer in this land, to accept in present circumstances of any grant of public money from the Government.

5. "That in these circumstances the Synod refuses to entertain the overture or grant the prayer of the petitioners now before it, prohibits and discharges all ministers and congregations from taking independent action in a matter so important, and enjoins them to submit, as constitutionally bound, to be guided by the action of this Supreme Court,—and further, the Synod instruct all Presbyteries to see that these resolutions are honestly and fully carried out."

in these, of very doubtful disputation, into terms of Ministerial fellowship;* thus not only preventing union with others, but creating disunion among themselves. Now this was done at the very time when, whatever their private sentiments were, which none would wish to disturb, it was evident that common policy, and common civility, would say that it was improper and inexpedient to make any judicial declaration about the Establishment principle—especially doing it as an essential article of their creed. Had there been any thing like a thorough conciliatory spirit, had there been any sincere desire for union with the other Church, they would have said on this occasion, 'We have been negotiating for union with a Church the most of whose Ministers are known to condemn the Establishment principle in every shape, but which, notwithstanding, leaves every one to think as he pleases. Let us, therefore, imitate their example, and, although it is true that most of us hold this principle, yet without enactments thereon, let us leave every one to think as he pleases. This will shew our brethren our willingness to meet them without committing ourselves. This will present us to them in the same attitude of forbearance in which they present themselves to us. This is the only way in which we can ever expect the union with our brethren to be consummated.' But instead of this, which was reasonable, they settle the question of union by deciding against it in resolutions on a different subject; and after the matter is thus settled—after they had got almost the whole Synod committed on points which render union impossible, they were to proceed in a day or two, to hear the Report of the Union Committee.

We now felt that Christ was wounded in the house of His friends; felt that a severe blow was given to the interests of the Church; that a dash was put to all those hopes we had fondly cherished of seeing this Presbyterian Church united with another, of equal rank in Christian purity, and of longer experience in Christian action, a union prevented by which the Presbyterian Church would have gained much, whilst it would have lost only what it would have been gain to lose. We remember after the deliverance on the Government grant question, to have said to some brethren, 'Do you know what you have done by these resolutions so inconsiderately carried?' No, they said. 'Well,' said we, 'you have decided another question of far more importance, which should have been left to your unbiassed and uncommitted consideration.' 'What is that?' said they. 'It is that you cannot unite with the United Presbyterian Church.' This they had not perceived, but they saw it when it was too late.

We now saw every prospect we had entertained of speedy union darkened by the clouds of prejudice; and felt cooled to this Church from which we had anticipated so much. What will they now say (thought we) to the question of union which is next to come on? If we are thus disappointed in a cause of inferior moment, what are we likely to feel in the other which is of vital importance? "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, what wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"

Will any reasonable man blame us in having strongly dissented against the resolutions of Synod on the present occasion?† What could we do

* Nothing would be more unreasonable than this. Indeed the Synod seemed to be under some infatuation, or they would never have been guilty of such rashness in the midst of negociations for union with the United Presbyterian Church. It would seem as if like the Papists they laid claim to infallibility:—"The Synod," says the minute, "enjoins upon Presbyteries to satisfy themselves fully as to the soundness of the views of all candidates for license and ordination, and all applicants for admission into this Church, whether as Probationers or Ordained Ministers on the subject of Christ's Headship over the nations, with special reference to the standards of the Church, and the deliverances of this Synod during the present session, relative to this great doctrine."

† The following is the tenor of our dissent:—"Concurring in the general design of the fifth

otherwise in consistency with our own views, and with the solemnly ratified terms of our connexion with this Church?" The brethren knew well that we could not join them in such proceedings, without acting inconsistently with our uniformly avowed sentiments. If we had been silent they would have had just cause to question our rectitude and sincerity. We would rather bear any thing, and it injure only ourselves, than complain. We cannot, however, be silent when we see Christ wounded in the house of His friends. We cannot glide down in the current of procedure whereby the independence of the Church is sacrificed, and, principles put forward which, although as mere theories they may be harmless, yet, if reduced to practice would, in some circumstances, involve the people of God, in the loss of all their Christian rights and privileges, and subject them, as they have often done, to the violence of persecution. In opposition to the dogmas of men, of which the prejudices of education conceal the danger, and to sophistries so artfully arranged that even those who use them are scarcely, if at all aware, we would, through evil report and good report, still cling with firmness and serenity to the immutable standard of the word of God.

After such a deliverance on the question of Government grants, it was

and last resolution, passed by the Synod on the evening of the 23rd June, 1848, which refuses to entertain the prayer of the overtures, and prohibits ministers and congregations of this Church from taking government grants, the subscriber dissents from the four resolutions preceding it for the following reasons:—

He dissents from all these resolutions, because the general decision of the Synod contained in the last resolution, might have been carried unanimously had it been disencumbered of these and because the passing of these preliminary resolutions, which were very unseasonably introduced, and hastily carried commits the members of court, not dissenting, to the approval of the principle of a civil establishment of religion, which there is reason to think many of them, as well as the dissenter, regard as anti-Christian, and as having been for many ages, whenever reduced to practice, the fertile source of turmoil and strife in civil society, and of serious and incalculable injury to the interests of religion.

More particularly he dissents from the first resolution, because the sense in which this Synod holds Christ to be King of nations is unwarranted by God's word,—as the term nations both in the Old Testament and in the New, where used in connexion with the Saviour's Kingly office, is the same with what is translated Gentiles or heathen, and cannot be understood of the geographical divisions of the earth into Nations or Kingdoms, as the resolution supposes, but of the world as distinguished from the Church. In proof of which even English readers, but more especially Hebrew and Greek readers, are referred to the following passages, viz.:—Jer. x. 2--7; xiv. 22. Psalm ix. 19, 20: xxii. 28; xlvii. 8. Luke xxi. 24. Acts xi. 18. Rom. ix. 24. Matt. vi. 7; xviii. 17. Gal. ii. 9. Luke xii. 30. Acts xiii. 19. Rev. ii. 26.

He further dissents from this resolution, because Christ is King of Nations, that is, of unconverted men, not in the same sense, and with the same design, that he is King of the Church, which is his proper kingdom; but as forming a part of his subsidiary kingdom—placed in subjection to him for a time for the good of his Church; and because, till they are brought under the influence of the Gospel, the nations in the Scripture sense of the word have neither the privilege nor the honour of having any service required of them to Christ or His Church.

He dissents from the second resolution, because in his opinion, the question of civil endowments, although in some sense of subordinate importance, is nevertheless, one on the scriptural decision of which depends, in a great measure, the peace, purity, progress, and final glorious destinies of the Christian Church; and because the civil establishment of religion at any period, by the magistrate, is an invasion by him on the royal prerogatives of Christ whilst the acceptance in any circumstances, of countenance of this description, from the magistrate, by the Church, is to supercede and violate an express ordinance of Christ, and, at once, to involve herself in serious guilt and peril.

He dissents from the third resolution, because the endowment of the Church by the civil magistrate is unscriptural, and, therefore unlawful at all times, and because, in no given circumstances can it be his duty to grant such endowment, or the Church's duty to accept of it, and because this grave question ought not to be determined on grounds of Christian expediency, but entirely by the Word of God.

He dissents from the fourth resolution, because all the reasons assigned for not accepting endowments in present circumstances, which reasons are, however, more or less applicable to all times, the principal reasons why endowments should now be, and should have always been rejected and repudiated by the Church, are entirely overlooked, namely, that they are subversive of the civil rights and liberties of men, that they are contrary to the genius and requisitions of the Gospel, that they have uniformly proved the source of persecution for conscience' sake, that they have always tended to weaken, corrupt and degrade the Church, and that they have ever been highly derogatory to the honour and glory due to Christ as the great King of Zion."

"That is in consistency with our having joined this Church with the exceptions mentioned, and of course with the understanding that the question of Establishments was to be a matter of forbearance, which these resolutions refused.

mockery to introduce the subject of union with the United Presbyterian Church. But introduced it was by the very person* who is understood to have framed the Resolutions on the Government grants. It may be said to have been managed by him with dexterity. His speech on the occasion was delivered with calmness and seriousness. We cannot suppose that he spoke as he thought, for we believe him to be thoroughly conscientious; and there was much seeming plausibility, and much calculated to deceive a stranger, in his statements. But they formed as gross a misrepresentation, however unintended, of the views of the United Presbyterian Church, as can well be conceived; and he was followed by others who never questioned the correctness of what was expressed. Dr. Burns succeeded with a speech, elsewhere noticed, in which he brought out the marrow of his ravings in the *Mare Magnum* controversy, and not only grossly misrepresented, but disgustingly caricatured the United Presbyterian Church, as holding views opposed to national subjection to God, to the sanctification of the Christian Sabbath, to the imposition of oaths and the law of marriage, and also tending to infidelity. These hackneyed assertions, of which we have had a sickening abundance, it is not our object to refute. Those who make them should first try to demonstrate them to be true; and the sober and serious people who hear them should class their utterers with the detestable retailers of scandal and forgers of lies. But surely in such circumstances we would have been inexcusable, if we had not expressed our sentiments as directly opposed to those who took the lead in this matter, and as in accordance with those of the United Presbyterian Church, which they had grossly maligned, and by doing which Christ had been grievously wounded in the house of His friends. We stated our conviction that on the whole the views of this Church on the point of difference, we were sorry to say, were unscriptural, and that on the other hand the views of the United Presbyterian Church were, in our opinion, agreeable to the Word of God, This was rather a sweeping charge, it is true, but circumstances warranted us to make it, and we are of the same opinion still. We felt at the time, and we feel still, that it ill became this Church, which was but of yesterday in its origin, and which had little experience in the practice of unfettered Christianity, to pretend even to judge of, and much less to condemn, the thoroughly matured sentiments of a Church which had the experience of more than a hundred years. What would you think of the lately liberated Slave who presumed to judge and decide with more wisdom on the principles of freedom and social order, than the enlightened Legislator who had always moved in the region of liberty? We had the satisfaction of obtaining the approbation in private of some of the members of Court, whose modesty prevented them from speaking, who said that we had not only spoken their mind, but had made a stand for Christ's cause, and Christ's Kingdom, which if it did not meet with the approbation of men, would doubtless be acknowledged and rewarded by God.

It has been said that the first Fathers of the Secession Church of Scotland were men of enlightened and liberal views, but that soon their Church was reinforced by Ministers, who, though excellent, were contracted in their principles, and whose influence soon gave a sectarian character to the Church from which it was long before it obtained full emancipation. If there be any truth in this, it seems also to be marking the early movements of the Presbyterian Church of Canada. Setting out with sentiments fraught with Christian charity, they soon left their first love, we should say perhaps their first light, and in the course of a few years have shut themselves up in the dark and dreary prison of sectarianism, from which

*The Rev. John Bayne of Galt.

it may be long before they make their escape. What the Head of the Church, in His mysterious sovereignty, may intend by permitting this it is not for us even to conjecture. But we hope and pray that light may break in upon them, as suddenly and unexpectedly, as this cloud has come over them, and that ere long at least the various Presbyterian denominations among us may see eye to eye.*

Where are now the professions of the Presbyterian Church of catholic principles, and their resolutions to organize a Church adapted to Canada? Where now those sentiments of forbearance by which they entice strangers, whom they would afterwards deprive of Christian liberty, or threaten with their severest vengeance, if they ventured to express their conscientious convictions and sustain them by the Word of God.

Bigotry, prejudice, and sectarianism are far more powerful than reason or sound principle. Those who are under the influence of such baneful feelings are strangers to themselves, and not aware how far they are misled, and how much they are blinded, by their pre-conceived notions.

Accustomed to cherish forbearance with Christians of every name, on points of subordinate character, we never imagined that men of a spirit so seemingly excellent as the Ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, could materially differ even in circumstantials from what we had been accustomed to consider sound views of divine truth. We conceived, and still think, that it is only in words and phrases, to which different shades of meaning are attached, that the differences lie. Nothing after all is necessary for complete and immediate union but forbearance on the Establishment principle. Yet it is too soon, it seems, from these recent deliverances, to expect this from a Church which has so lately emanated from the fetters of the State.

It was now the Synod proceeded to further illustration of its sectarianism, and to show, by commencing a process against us, that freedom of speech is denied in their Court, unless it be in supporting and reiterating the narrow and selfish views of a few who assume the lead in its administrations.

It is not necessary to go over that course of procedure, and of attempted inquisitorial scrutiny, which the Synod now instituted in reference to our views.

First of all it was unnecessary, for, on the subject, our mind had been long matured, and we considered every endeavour to shake us from our principles as but the fighting of one that beateth the air. Again, it was uncalled for, seeing the question of union was before the supreme court, and we had an equal right to give our sentiments with the others. If we had acted the hypocrite, by expressing concurrence in their views, they would have caressed us. It was our honesty and conscientiousness that exposed us to their hostility. We knew of no limit in a FREE CHURCH where our sentiments were known, by which we should either have been restrained from speaking, or have not spoken as we thought. We did not know that this Court would threaten its members with censure if they happened, in expressing their candid sentiments on any

* On this occasion we proposed the following motion in the Synod, which although lost, may be presented here as it exhibits the only terms on which union is ever likely to take place between these Churches: "That the Synod approve of the diligence of their committee in this cause, and express their sincere thanks for the long and faithful attention they have given to the subject; and that they now relieve them from this service, and appoint another Committee to meet any Committee of the United Presbyterian Church, with instructions to them to propose that all points regarding the power of the civil magistrate should be matters of mutual forbearance, and to form a basis of union to be submitted to the different Synods on the great points of Christian doctrine and duty on which they are agreed: and that this Synod pledge themselves that whatever views they may entertain as individuals, on the subject of the magistrate's power, they shall not divide the church by reducing them to practice, and, in particular, that they shall act on the principle that it is inexpedient in the present state of the Church and the World for ministers to accept of any aid from civil Governments."

subject which came before them, to differ from their brethren. But it was especially uncalled for in the present instance, where it appeared evident that the Synod were trying to force on the church principles which had no existence in the standards, and to overlook, if not oppose principles which these standards contain. Again, it was a breach of good faith with us. We had entered the church on the general principles, already mentioned, not intending to controvert or expose the Establishment principle, which we knew the most of them held, but certainly, at the same time, not expecting that they would misrepresent and ridicule any principle held by us, or by the United Presbyterian Church. If the views of that church, and our own views, had been fairly stated, we would have had no occasion to say a word; but the matter was very different when the Presbyterian Church did justice neither to the United Presbyterians nor to themselves. It would be found on enquiry, that in the resolutions and deliverances they had now given, they were not only fighting against the United Presbyterian Church, but were palpably departing from their own standards.*

We have never done more than stood on the defensive, as we would think it wrong when we were in connection with this Presbyterian Church to make any attack upon its peculiarities. But the conscientious resistance, which we were surely entitled to make to the misrepresentation of views held by ourselves, has brought on us the hostility of the rabid defenders of the Establishment principle. By blunt hints, and harsh language, some of them endeavored to provoke us to withdraw from their Church of our own accord—a step, however, in which we determined not to gratify them. We knew well that they wished this only to save themselves the odium of our ejection. But that odium, or honour, if they think it such, we resolved to give them, and therefore we have uniformly endeavoured to follow the course which Providence opened.

Before it broke up, the Synod of 1848 appointed the Hamilton Presbytery to enquire into our views. Had this Presbytery acted honourably they would have declined the appointment. They would have told the Synod that they had admitted and inducted us on our own principles; that they knew these and forbore with us; that it was too late for them to interfere; that if we held views which the Synod could not tolerate they must blame the Presbytery of Hamilton for it; but that seeing we had been admitted not only with the consent and approbation of this Presbytery, but of all the Presbyteries of the Church, it would be better to let the matter drop.

The enquiry came to nothing; and having from time to time presented garbled and unintelligible Reports of their procedure in the Ecclesiastical Record, they at length remitted the whole matter to the Synod. In the meantime, from the misrepresentations which had been made, we felt it necessary for our own vindication to publish our views, and we endeavored to do so in the Christian spirit.

The Synod condemned our Pamphlet without reading it, and it was remarked by many after it was read, they found nothing in it to condemn. But it was apparent that although they could do nothing in the way of positive accusation, for they could fix on no expression, and on no sentiment which they could deliberately challenge as unscriptural, yet having gone so far in this matter it was necessary to do something in the way of vindicating themselves from the charge of absurdity, or of undue or pre-

* See Tower of Babel, where it is shown that the doctrine of Christ's Headship over the nations is not specifically mentioned in the Confession of Faith; but, at variance with the views of the Free Church, is summarily and orthodoxly presented, and brought down to the capacity of children, in the answer to the question in our shorter Catechism,—How doth Christ execute the office of a king?

cipitate rigour. After a few speeches, therefore, in which much eloquence was expended, without touching the plain subject before them, they pretended to come to a deliverance whereby certain extravagant findings are alleged against us, and the matter was devolved on the Commission to meet in October 1849, with power to them to bring it to a final issue. Whether by these alleged findings they intended to frighten us, as well as blind the public is unknown. But desirous to make another effort to bring us round to their views, they appointed a Committee of their number to go to Hamilton to meet us before the time of the Commission.

The following are the findings of the Synod:—"The Synod find that the views set forth by Dr. F. are in various particulars inconsistent with the doctrine of Christ's supremacy over nations and civil governments, as held by this Church,* and that any exception taken by him to the usual formula at his Induction, and which, it appears, so far as conceded by the Presbytery, was understood by them to respect only the legal or compulsory maintenance of a Gospel Ministry,† cannot be allowed to cover the latitude he claims in impugning the great principles of national duty and responsibility,‡ in its other momentous bearing. But as he disclaims any desire to disturb the harmony of the Church, the Synod with a view to all possible removal of misunderstanding, appoint a Committee further to deal with him, and to report the result to the Commission, that shall meet in October, who are hereby empowered, if they deem it for the interests of truth, and for edification, to bring the matter to a conclusion, having respect to the harmony of the Church and to the testimony to which the Synod adheres for the principles of divine revelation, and of the Christian law, as of authority to men in their collective and national, as well as private relations and actings."

In regard to this document, to which we shall afterwards have occasion further to refer, it is all gratuitous assertion without a shadow of proof, and it could easily be shown to be all contrary to fact. How unworthy of a Court of Christ, and how severe a wounding of Christ, in the house of His friends, was it for this Synod to imitate the Saviour's enemies in laying to our charge things which we knew not! Why wrap themselves up in a cloud of obscurity, in their attempts to criminate, when the only crime, which even they are ashamed to call a crime, is that we are of voluntary sentiments, and only what they knew us to be when they received us; and when we adhere in every iota to the Westminster standards, with the single exception of the power there given to the civil Magistrate in matters of religion, from which this Church as might be shown now take exception in a more *exceptionable form*.§ Why thus

* We hold the supremacy of Christ over nations and civil governments to the utmost extent, but we deny that it is held correctly by the Free Church; for, professing to hold this doctrine, they neutralize and vitiate it by receiving entire the Confession which ascribes to nations and civil governments a superiority over Christ and His church.

† How could that be when according to them this is not even mentioned in the Standards?

‡ What are these great principles, and wherein have they been impugned by us? They cannot tell.

§ The United Presbyterian Church gives no explanations of the obnoxious passages in the Confession, but leaving every individual to judge of their meaning for himself, they take their exception to the clauses in something like the modest form which follows:—"We retain the Westminster Confession of Faith, with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, as the confession of our faith, expressive of the sense in which we understand the Holy Scriptures; it being always understood, however, that we do not approve or require an approbation of any thing in these books, or in any other, which teaches, *or may be thought to teach*, compulsory or persecuting and intolerant principles in matters of religion."

But the Presbyterian Church explain the passages to answer themselves, forgetting that we have no right by any explanation of ours to put other meaning on language than what its author meant.

The Confession says, "The civil magistrate hath authority, and it is his duty to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in

keep by vague generalities, and accuse and condemn us, for something which they cannot name, which they cannot describe, which they cannot point out, and which probably has no existence but in their own imagination? Never condescending to tell what our alleged errors really were, the Synod seemed by a blaze of words, and by this formidable array of findings, not from anything we said or published, but from their own imaginations to determine to make the most graceful escape from the awkward predicament into which they had brought themselves.

The Synod's findings are perfectly ridiculous. Where did they find them? Was it in any paper of ours? No. Was it in our Pamphlet? No, for that had not been considered; and that Pamphlet disproves the application of every one of the findings. Was it by a comparison of our sentiments with their standards that the findings were obtained? No, for the standards are all held by us excepting the compulsory power assigned in them to the civil Magistrate, which the Presbyterian Church also professes to refuse to him as appears by the preceding note. Where then was it that these findings were found? It was only in their own heated imagination. Of course it would never have done to have condemned us without finding something, and therefore because they could find nothing that was tangible in anything said or done by us, they create findings to suit their purpose by the vagaries of their own fancy, and the flights of their digressive eloquence. Is this worthy of a Court of Christ? Is this like conscientious and honourable Judges in the affairs of the Church? Was not this a wounding of Christ in the house of His friends?

Of the Committee appointed to meet in Hamilton none came but four of the strenuous defenders of the power given in the Confession to the Civil Magistrate, and who probably thought that the Tower of Babel was erected to assail their bulwarks. It was of no use to converse with men almost all of whom were under the influence of unconquerable prejudice.

The October Commission came next, but for reasons assigned, instead

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worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed."

The Presbyterian Church of Canada explain the sense in which they receive this by saying:—"We hold that the civil magistrate has no supremacy over the church, nor any power therein." This is just telling us that Yes means No.

Again, the Confession says:—"The magistrate hath power to call Synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the word of God."

Explaining this, the Presbyterian Church says:—"We hold that the civil magistrate hath no right to convoke, or preside in, or dictate to, the Assemblies of the Church, or to regulate or review their proceedings in matters ecclesiastical." This again is literally contradicting the meaning of language.

Now these alleged explanations contain what we think correct views,—the views said to be held by the Presbyterian Church, and the views really held by the United Presbyterian Church. But we deny that they are explanations of the passages in the Confession They are the substitution of other sentiments in their place. They are the adoption of what is truth for what is error. They are an attempt to find the very sentiments of the Voluntaries (as if they were not their sentiments) where they are not to be found. But in doing this they proceed in a way of which we cannot approve. It is done by evasive, we might say by dishonest, means; and those who silently assent to the second question of the formula under such interpretations appear to us to act either without judgment or hypocritically. We can subscribe to the general sentiments contained in these alleged explanations of the Confession. But to call them explanations, and to require an assent to them as such, appears to us to be a very fraudulent and culpable way of getting over a difficulty. If this is to be practised in the Presbyterian Church of Canada, well may other churches speak of them as time-servers and hypocrites, and hold them up to scorn and ridicule. The Unitarian might subscribe to the Confession on the same principle; for we have only to allow him to explain the sense in which he receives those passages which present difficulties, as for instance by declaring that the passage which teaches the doctrine of the Trinity, does not mean that there are three distinct persons in the Godhead, and that those which teach the divinity and atonement of Christ, are not to be understood as teaching that Christ is a Divine person, or that His death is a vicarious sacrifice.

of going to Toronto, we preferred sending a letter, and leaving the matter in their hands. As this letter has been wrongfully kept back, and its plain meaning made the subject of unnecessary difficulty and dispute, it is proper to give it a place here. The following is a copy:—

CALEDONIA, 18th October, 1849.

BRETHREN,—In parting with the Moderator in Hamilton, I asked if he thought it would be necessary for me to be in Toronto at the meeting of the Commission. He said he thought not, but added that it would be more respectful to be there if possible. It is quite inconvenient for me to be there at present, yet I would have overcome this inconvenience but for the impression that I could transact with more apparent respect for the Commission by being absent. For whilst, whether present or absent, I bear them the most profound respect as a Court of Christ, I could not be present without very decidedly expressing my refusal of every finding against me in the Synod's motion, and more strongly still my disapproval of the tenor of the Committee's report to the Commission. I shall reserve all this, however, till afterwards, should it be necessary, which I hope it will not, for I am disposed to forget and forgive what is past, and I fear that I might say something in the Commission were I there, which would rather widen than heal the breach, and this I am very unwilling to do, when I see so much of a conciliatory spirit from different quarters of the Church. There seems to be some prodigious mistake in the whole of this matter in magnifying our real or supposed differences to an unreasonable degree, when the fact is I agree to every iota of the Standards, with the single and slight exception of refusing to the Civil Magistrate the compulsory and persecuting power which they seem to me and to many to give him, and which power even the Presbyterian Church of Canada seem as strongly to object to as myself, with the only difference that they think it not in the standards: of course the difference one would think must after all be only in words.

From the kind conciliatory statements in some late numbers of the Record, and I trust the existence of a growing desire in both the Presbyterian and the United Presbyterian Churches for Union, I am now more than ever disposed, and I trust the Commission are equally disposed to waive the further prosecution of this vexatious discussion, which should never have begun, and which would sooner or later end only where it began. I simply present to them the following statements and for the present leave the matter in their hands, reserving the privilege of assenting to, or dissenting from any deliverance to which they may come.

1. That in joining this Church it was plainly declared and fully understood by the Subscriber, and he thought perfectly known to the Presbytery of Hamilton, and others, that he held the principles of the United Secession Church of Scotland, in which he was reared, and of course the views of that Church on the power of the Civil Magistrate in matters of religion, and it was in particular distinctly stated that he was opposed, like most of that Church, to civil establishments of religion in every form, and to the very principle on which they are based; and now, to prevent all possibility of future misunderstanding, he wishes it to be publicly known, as he here most solemnly declares, that his principles are the same as ever, and that the longer he lives he is the more confirmed in the belief that they are thoroughly sound and scriptural.

2. That as he fully understood the Presbyterian Church of Canada to be desirous of forming a Church for the Province, on sound Catholic principles, to which all Evangelical Presbyterians might assent, without insisting on the peculiarities of any denomination, and as he accorded

with them on the grand doctrines of Grace, and had no intention to insist on his own peculiarities, he conceived that Union with them was practicable, not only so far as he was concerned, but with all of similar sentiments with himself.

3. That it appears from recent proceedings that the difference between the Presbyterian and United Presbyterian Churches is, after all, more in words than in sentiments; and that a Union might very easily be effected, to the unspeakable advantage of the Province, were both parties to look to the great general principles on which they agree, and out of some of which when unnecessarily produced, their differences arise; and he hereby declares his cordial and full assent to the views of Dr. Stevenson, as given in the Record for August last, and proposed there as a resting place where all parties might harmoniously unite, and he also declares his assent in general to the explanation of the obnoxious passages of the Confession of Faith, given by our Committee on Union, with this understanding that he considers it no explanation of these passages, but an independent declaration of the genuine sentiments of this Church.

4. That he has no wish, and no intention, to disturb the harmony of this Church by broaching his own peculiarities, which he has never yet done but in repelling the obtrusion of opposite views, but it must be understood that if the same system of misrepresentation of any views held by him, or by the United Presbyterian Church, shall be practised by individuals of this Church, or if this is countenanced in any measure by this Church, he will feel himself at perfect liberty, if not in duty bound, to expose and repel all such uncharitable proceedings.

And 5. That having for four years employed all his time, energies and influence, such as they are, in promoting the interests of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, he will continue to do so, and is willing to cooperate with them in harmony and love on all the great principles of Christianity, agreeing to differ as they may on the circumstantials of religion, and seeking diligently and faithfully with them the glory of Christ and the peace, purity, progress, and prosperity of his Church,

A. F.

How absurd was it to contend about the meaning of this letter, which is quite plain and simple, and how uncandid to present their quibblings and opposite views about it, without giving it to the public at once as it is, and as we understand one of the liberal members of the Commission proposed, and thus have put a stop to the curiosity or suspicion they had excited, and kept up so long, by vague statements. A sensible office-bearer of the Church remarked:—"We heard often in the Record of Dr. F.'s case, but never from any thing that was said could we possibly conceive what it was. Is it possible that it was only the Voluntary Question that they were making such a mystery about? Why not plainly, and at once, say so? Ah! that would not do, that would let out the whole secret to the public, and were it thought to be nothing but the Voluntary Question we would be laughed at for our pains, as that would have led to the conclusion that it was all a farce together,—no matter about which so much work should have been made,—only the Voluntary question on which nine-tenths of the people would say the Doctor was right, and that the Synod were befooling themselves by making so much ado about it." Yes, the Synod know very well that we have the people's side of the question, and, therefore, very ingeniously, they have of late contrived a new way to present it, pretending it to be a different subject. They are now exhibiting us in another attitude, namely, as holding views on the Headship of Christ different from themselves, as if the subject of

Christ's Headship were different, so far as we have handled it, from the Voluntary Question. But let none be deceived by their words on this subject. It is still the Voluntary Question, and nothing more, although they now dignify it by calling it the Headship of Christ about which we differ from them. Our views on the Headship of Christ, whether as King of the Church, or as King of Nations, are precisely those of the standards. But we regard it as a gross perversion of all reason, a violent torturing of all language to interpret the third section of the twenty-third chapter of the Confession, and the other disputed passages, as presenting a Scriptural view of Christ's Headship over the Nations. It is precisely, we might say it is profanely, the very opposite. Yes, the Church is brought under the power of the State, or the power of the Civil Magistrate, and thus the Civil Magistrate, instead of being directed by Christ's Law to what is just and right, as he ought to be, directs by his own law the affairs of Christ's Church, and thus would arrogate and exercise a superiority to Christ himself.* This is no exaggeration of the language of the Confession. Explain it as you may it comes to this at last. It was well remarked in an Address of the English Independents to Dr. Chalmers on the organization of the Free Church :—"You must reject or amend the Confession of Faith, Dear and honoured Sir, the truth must be told and you must hear it: either renounce the Confession of Faith, or renounce your claim to consistency. You hold that book entire, unmodified, and unchanged. Nay, you and your friends professed throughout the whole of your conflict with the State to have been contending simply for the doctrines of the Confession of Faith. But if there is meaning in language that book is utterly fatal to your claim of spiritual independence."

Notwithstanding the slight difference of view between the Presbyterian and United Presbyterian Churches on the subject of the Magistrate's power, and on Christ's Headship over the nations as connected therewith, might they not forbear and be united? "The only apparent hindrance of any consequence is the importance attached by the Free Church to the principle of establishments, and the acknowledgment demanded from all its office bearers of that Principle by an unqualified subscription of the Confession of Faith. Happily this fact does not prevent co-operation. Even on the Establishment Question it admits of Union in maintaining that the Church, established or unestablished, must be free; and that all Christians should combine in breaking the fetters of enthralled Christianity. But is this all that can be done? If we were in earnest about Union could we accomplish nothing more? Perhaps it might be found, in a friendly conference, that the difference was not so formidable as has been sometimes alleged; that the Free Churchman has no wish to secularize religion by connecting it with the State, and the Voluntary Churchman just as little design, through a dissolution of this connexion, to make Governments infidel. On both hands it might be allowed that Christ is Head over the Nations: and that if there be any question it does not respect the fact, but only the mode of His rule. It might be conceded that supposing the twenty-third chapter of the Con-

* Some of the brethren were much surprised when we told them that their view of Christ's Headship was not in the Standards; others actually searched for it there, but could not find it; others have acknowledged that we are perfectly right. One learned brother pointed to the twenty-third chapter of the Confession, and said "There it is." But if it be there, which we deny, it must be the very principle of compulsion and persecution from which we dissent. No, it is not there, the reverse is there. There we have the Headship of the Nations in their civil rulers, over Christ and His Church, not the Headship of Christ over the Nations. The truth is, that what the Presbyterian Church of Canada calls the Headship of Christ over the Nations, is neither more nor less than the Establishment Principle under another name. We do not think that by such a subterfuge any one of them is capable of wishing by good words and fair speeches to deceive the hearts of the simple, and we are glad that our esteemed friend, the Rev. Professor Esson has lent his valuable aid, by his judicious and seasonable pamphlet, last year, to put the Church right in this particular, as well as on other points to which they have too long been strangers.

fession should admit of a good meaning, it is injudiciously and ungnarredly worded, and that a good opportunity is hence afforded for bringing the whole subject of it under review. It might appear that if neither the Establishment Principle nor the Voluntary Principle were made a term of office, a mutual forbearance respecting them, would not obstruct the discharge of any present duty."*

The deliverance of the Commission in October 1849, was considered by us and all our friends as final, and although it was by no means satisfactory, and might have been remonstrated against as unworthy of the Court, yet all thoughts of this were abandoned in consequence of a new and extraordinary turn being given to the whole matter, and one which has both to ourselves and the Congregation brought about what we trust is an auspicious revolution in Ecclesiastical connexion. The occurrences which fall now to be noticed, have rendered this revolution in no respect our own doing, but entirely His work who can bring good out of evil. In the whole course of events we have the satisfying consciousness of having never out-stepped, but always followed the openings of Providence; and so unexpected and surprising has the change been, yet so acceptable, that we were ready to say with the returning Jews,—"When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion we were like them that dream."

This event, although of little importance to any but ourselves, yet, from the causes and occurrences which have led to it, is entitled to the candid attention of the Christian Public, especially of those who belong to the Presbyterian and United Presbyterian Churches, as strikingly illustrating the narrow, selfish, hurtful and unchristian policy, of the former, or what is commonly, though very improperly, called the Free Church; and the superior adaptation of the United Presbyterian Church, (from the perfect security it affords for civil and religious liberty, as well as its thoroughly Scriptural constitution,) to the condition and necessities of this rising Province.

We have been cut off from connection with the Presbyterian Church of Canada in a manner the most arbitrary and tyrannical, merely, it would seem in one view, to gratify the pride and spleen of a faction of our Congregation, deserving of the scorn and reprobation of the Church Courts, which our Session, in the conscientious and faithful discharge of duty, had treated with the greatest tenderness when they incurred the censures of the Church; and this has been done, as will appear, under a false pretence, and on grounds entirely beyond the powers with which the Commission that brought about the crisis was entrusted by the Synod, by which it will appear, in another view, to have been a purpose, if not a plot, of the Church judicatories.

The history of the faction, and the unmerited patronage it received from the Ecclesiastical Courts, in opposition to all truth and justice, together with the narrative already presented, are not honourable to this Presbyterian Church; and certainly, wherever they are known, are sufficient to lower it in public estimation and confidence, to make its ministers feel that they are in danger when, with impartiality and faithfulness, they endeavour to discharge their duty, and to occasion regret among the godly that, by the reckless procedures of this Church, Christ should be so seriously and so often wounded in the house of His friends.

But for the better understanding of the matter, it may here be remarked in general that certain leaders in the Synod, seemingly determined, if possible, to keep back the progress of liberal sentiments, appeared to be exceedingly anxious to find some pretext for excluding us from their Church, and to have felt that as this had not been accomplished by the

* See Essay on Christian Union by the Rev. David King, L.L.D., Grey Friars Church, Glasgow, Scotland.

Supreme Court in June 1849, nor by their Commission in the October following, there was little chance of attaining it without some underhand procedure. With this view "some members of Presbytery in Hamilton," we are informed, although we are unwilling to believe it, encouraged the faction, advising and directing their leader in the course he pursued,* in which he had the vanity to believe, and to make them believe, he would readily bring the whole Congregation to concur; and this it was thought would be an excuse for separating us from our flock, and in consequence, perhaps, from the Presbyterian Church.

With this view the Congregation were to be assembled to pass a vote of want of confidence, because we did not, like most of the Synod, hold the principle of an Establishment. On this, it is understood, was to be founded a complaint to the Presbytery, with a view to revive proceedings against us; and because they had not succeeded by fair means to bring us over to their sectarian notions, to accomplish, if possible, by this new scheme, our ejection from the Church.

What secretly induced the Faction-leader to move in this matter is best known to himself. But whatever it was he seems to have felt it necessary to fix on some reason, not real but ostensible, that might have weight in some quarters, or perhaps, we should say, to have found it convenient to adopt readily the course suggested by his friends, the "members of Presbytery." The independent course which had been uniformly pursued by the Minister, in the diligent discharge of his Pastoral duties, made it impossible, we trust, for this disturber of the Congregation's peace, or his advisers, to start opposition by an honest and honourable course, and, therefore, like the Presidents and Princes of the Court of Persia, in reference to Daniel of old, they perhaps felt that they could find no "occasion" against the Minister except they found it, "concerning the law of his God."

It would never have done for the agitator to go forward to this course abruptly, or even avowedly, as nothing was known in the Congregation but prosperity and peace†; and therefore, he attempted it by double-dealing and deception—for so it is with corrupt human nature that that of which we are ready to accuse our neighbour is very often something of which we are guilty ourselves.‡

Accordingly in the month of January, 1850, pretending to wish to arrange pecuniary matters before entering the new Church, which could have been finished in a week, but the finishing of which had been purposely delayed, he proposed a meeting of the Congregation. At this public meeting, which soon took place, to the astonishment of those present he burst upon them with a series of unmannerly resolutions, calumniating the Minister, and especially wishing to carry the motion of want of confidence, to get them to disown him, and to withhold their

* We would be the last to suspect any of our brethren of such baseness, and we still endeavour to banish the thought from our mind. But it was the Faction-leader who charged them, and it is not easy to explain, on any other supposition, the confidence of success always indicated by this individual, when all knew him to be guilty, and the manner in which the Session and Congregation were treated, first by the Presbytery, and afterwards by the Commission of Synod. The language of this individual both in the public meeting of the Congregation, and to persons in private, was to the effect that he had not taken his course "unadvisedly," but had the advice of "Members of the Presbytery."

It is said that the Presbytery and Synod were led to believe that Caledonia congregation would stand or fall with this individual, and that he had the vanity and assurance to boast of this. At all events it is supposed that he cherished the idea, and led others to believe it true, that he could easily turn the people to any purpose he might suggest, as they were all simple minded men, led by a Baptist and an Episcopalian.

† It ought to be distinctly noticed that till January, 1850, nothing but harmony and love prevailed, when with the suddenness and fury of a volcanic eruption, and without any visible cause, the attempt was made to sow the seeds of animosity and strife.

‡ This was the accusation which the Faction-leader brought against his Minister, double-dealing and insincerity, because he held Voluntary principles, and yet was a Minister of the Presbyterian Church.

support because he held the principles of the United Presbyterian Church on the Magistrate's power in matters of religion. But to his great mortification, the good sense and christian feeling of the people spurned at his proposed resolutions, and they were all put down by the indignant and almost unanimous voice of the assembled Congregation.

He and his adherents had further determined to discontinue their attendance on ordinances; in short, had determined virtually to cut themselves off, thinking that their example would be followed by all. If they had quietly done this without attempting to pollute the minds of the people with their contemptible gossip and slander, it would have been of comparatively little consequence. But from their subsequent conduct, it became necessary, for the satisfaction and peace of the congregation, that the Session should take up the whole matter. Never was there a clearer case of necessity for exercising Church discipline. This tool of "members of Presbytery," with two who joined him, were clearly found guilty, though in different degrees, and because they would make no concession, but showed contumacy of behaviour, and contempt for the Court, and likewise expressed their determination to persist in their unchristian conduct, were, in the meantime, suspended from their privileges.* The Faction-leader, however, was not shaken. He seemed to know that his friends, "the members of Presbytery," would bear him out of this difficulty; and although the honest and unsuspecting Session, having done only their duty; considered that they had nothing to fear, and nothing could they possibly have to fear from any upright Court, which took the trouble to examine the case, yet this Faction-leader, although they knew it not, and even after they were told believed it not, was before them, and had full assurance that he would be sustained.—He and his two supporters appealed of course to the Presbytery.

The Faction mixed up their reasons of protest with false and scurrilous matter, for had their cause been judged as it ought, by its own merits, it would not have stood a hearing. They insinuated that dissatisfaction had been growing in the Congregation since we had published our pamphlet, and also that we had since obtruded our sentiments on the Congregation, both in public and private, not keeping good faith with the Church. Both these charges are directly contrary to truth; and all the people were ready, had an opportunity been given, to shew their utter falsehood. But these and other slanders, which the Session thought beneath their notice, were seized by the Presbytery. Our Faction-leader, who most successfully played upon the credulity of the Court, was hailed and encouraged there as the redoubtable champion of Free Church peculiarities, and as the decided opponent of Voluntary Principles; and although we have reason to know that he was not acquainted with the distinctive principles either of one Church or another, yet now to serve an iniquitous purpose he pretends to wondrous zeal for the principle of a civil Establishment of Religion; nay, from the correspondence he had held with his friends the "members of Presbytery," he could predict all that would take place. Well might those who know him say, "We never saw it on this fashion." "Is Saul also among the Prophets?"

It was the opinion of the Session, ignorant in a great measure, as they were, that this movement was a deeply laid conspiracy against the Minister, that the cause appealed would never obtain a hearing in the higher Court, and that it would be remitted to the Session with instructions to preserve the usual order of the Church; and such we know would have been the case in any Court that was impartial and uncom-

* This was considered the most lenient censure, and it was not till every endeavour to avoid even this had failed, that it was inflicted. All that the Session required was an acknowledgment from these individuals that they had acted wrong, and a promise to preserve peace in future, and these they obstinately refused.

mitted. But when it is known that the case was prejudged, and that members of the Court were themselves implicated, what justice was to be expected? It was heard on all sides except the true one, but wherever truth would have unfolded itself, and exposed the iniquity of the Faction it was not heard.* To the astonishment of the Minister and his Elder, and several judicious members of the Congregation who were present to bear testimony to the false representations of the protesters, but were refused a hearing, the Presbytery never looked at the case at all, but on the contrary seemed to be perfectly prepared not only to vindicate the cunning and guilty protesters,† and to bear down the honest Session, but to take the opportunity, from false and irrelevant matter, of again contending with the Minister.

The following was their deliverance;—"It was moved by Mr. Bayne, and seconded by Mr. Robb, that the Presbytery sustain the Protest and Appeal, refuse the decision of the Kirk-Session appealed from; but inasmuch as the documents and pleadings which have come before them in the consideration of the case, have revealed the existence of evils in the Congregation urgently calling for investigation with a view to a remedy: and inasmuch also as these evils appear in a great measure to have originated in the result of the Presbytery's long dealing with Dr. F., on the subject of his views on the Headship of Christ, and that the carrying out of the investigations and dealings necessary, would be better conducted by parties who have not been directly involved in the proceedings referred to, the Presbytery submit the case of the Congregation to the Synod with a recommendation that they would appoint a commission of Synod for the purpose specified and further the presbytery appoint the Moderator, and the Rev. John Bayne, to state the reasons of this recommendation to the Synod."

No protest was taken‡ against the restoration of the three individuals, because however unreasonable the reversal of the Session's sentence was, yet if this recommendation of the Presbytery had been faithfully followed out, as was expected, all that the Session and Congregation could desire would have been secured, as the only remedy for the alleged evils in the Congregation was the excision of these disturbers of its peace, or their submission to order. The representatives of the Session and congregation present, knew that if an impartial and honourable Commission were appointed by the Synod they would have no difficulty to discover where alone the evil lay, and that the Presbytery were under the delusion of prejudice in tracing it in any degree to the cause they did. In short, they were hopeful that the Commission, if appointed, would do justice to the Minister and Session, as well as to the Congregation in this matter, by detecting and putting down this overbearing faction by which they had been agitated.

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* It is not easy for strangers to form the least conception of the manner in which the adherents of this Faction had been conducting themselves before the session interfered, as it was less apparent to the public eye. But after that it became more and more visible and it is painful to state that during the three months before the Presbytery met, as many of the congregation can testify, they might be observed coming to the House of God, not to worship but to mock, they might be seen indecently pushing themselves forward in the time of prayer, sitting like statues during the whole service, evidently not only uninterested but holding divine ordinances in contempt, and exposing them to derision, they might be seen conducting themselves in various ways with studied levity in the sanctuary, so as to disturb the worship of the godly, and give occasion to the careless or profane to speak reproachfully.

† According to this Hamilton Presbytery, a Session has no right to challenge its members for slander and deceit, for disrespect to God's servants and God's ordinances, for contempt of a spiritual Court, and for a proud and obstinate determination to break up the peace of a prosperous congregation.

‡ If it had been thought that the Commission would have taken advantage of this, most assuredly a Protest would have been entered. But the proposal of a Commission to enquire into the state of the congregation seemed to make this unnecessary.

The following is the Report of the Presbytery Elder on this deliverance as made to the Session of Caledonia and vicinities :—

"The Superior Court instead of summoning the Session before it, which a cause of such importance required, as it affected the whole Congregation, and which their own, and the Congregations' representatives were present to require, proceeded in the most partial and summary manner, without ever looking at the merits of the case at all, excepting where the protesters had distorted it, to give judgment; that the Presbytery seemed determined at all hazards to bear down the Session, and shelter the Protesters; that whilst they blamed the Session for being hasty and cruel in their sentence, for which there was no foundation, they seemed to be hasty and cruel themselves in reversing it; that some leaders of the Presbytery appeared evidently to have committed themselves to the Protesters in private, and had prejudged the cause; that they took for granted that the Congregation was divided, and would not hear its Commissioners who were present for the express purpose of shewing it to be otherwise; that the slang and gossip presented by the protesters, which the Session considered beneath their notice, were eagerly seized on by the Presbytery as an excuse for pursuing an object with which this cause has no connection, excepting what the Protesters by their misrepresentations had forced on it; and that the Elder and commissioners, who were disgusted at the Presbytery's proceedings, and looked on it as an humbling spectacle for Christian Ministers to exhibit, could scarcely fail to be convinced that there must be truth in what was before reported that the Protesters had been stirred up by individuals connected with the Presbytery itself to the course they had taken, and had acted under their advice. In short, such was the manner in which the case was treated, that the Session's representatives, as well as the congregation's Commissioners, felt that it was far better to yield to circumstances, than to honour such disgraceful proceedings with an appeal to the Supreme court; and therefore they left the whole matter open to the proposed Commission, from which justice was surely to be expected, if it could be found at all in this denomination."

The Synod appointed a Commission, as suggested by the Presbytery. The following is their minute on this matter :—

"The Synod took up the reference from the Presbytery of Hamilton respecting the congregation of Caledonia. Several Members addressed the House, when, on the motion of Dr. Willis, seconded by Mr. McDowell, it was agreed,—

"That the Moderator, Dr. Burns; Mr. Harris, Mr. Ball, Mr. McMurray, Mr. McLeod, Mr. McKenzie, Ministers; Mr. Osborne, Mr. McLellan, and Mr. Blain, Elders; be appointed as a Commission of Synod to visit the congregation of Caledonia, and authorise them to meet with the Minister, Session, and Congregation there, to enquire into the evils alleged to be existing there to the hindrance of unity, mutual confidence and edification, authorise them to act with the usual powers of a Synodical Court of Review, and if they fail in their endeavours to establish harmony in consistency with the finding of the recent Commission as authenticated by this Synod, power is hereby granted to proceed to final judgment, according to the laws of the Church, notwithstanding any appeals that may be attempted to be taken from their finding. If they see cause for libel, they shall commit the proceedure into the hands of the Presbytery of Hamilton, who are empowered, assisted by the Committee, or any three of their number, to proceed to a judgment in the case, staying nevertheless a final sentence in the case of appeals."

On this deliverance, although it is rather obscure, and in some parts unintelligible, the following remarks may be made :—

I. It was passed in total ignorance of facts, and, not only so, but under impressions which were precisely the reverse of truth,—it being afterwards allowed, by some of the Commission, that the Synod were under the impression that the whole congregation at Caledonia were on the side of the faction, and that the resolutions of the faction-leader had all carried.*

II. That there was no hindrance to mutual confidence and edification whatever, but simply the existence of a small faction, the ring-leaders of which the Session had been obliged to suspend,—that this faction was headed by one man, without whom it could not exist, and that even this one man, as he confessed, was stirred up and advised to his course —and that whilst the source of alleged evil, according to his confession, which we were unwilling to believe, was in the "Members of Presbytery," instigating this one man to stir up strife, the congregation at large were innocent, were unsuspecting, were united among themselves, were vigorous in their collective strength, and were determined to proceed in an independent course of christian duty.

III. That if the Synod had been aware of the real state of things they would never have given a Commission such powers as they did, or even thought it necessary to appoint a Commission at all; but would only have supported and encouraged the Session in the firm and faithful discharge of their official duties.

And IV. That without finding something new, which they could not, it appears clear that the Commission, even with the very unreasonable power given them, had no right to proceed simply and solely on the ground of published sentiments, none of which had ever been shown, or could be shown, whatever is pretended, to be contrary even to the Westminster Standards, and much less to the Word of God. To judge and decide entirely or at all on this ground was not committed to them. In doing it they out-stepped their prerogative.†

Between the announcement of this appointment, and the meeting resulting from it, neither the Faction nor the Congregation were idle. The former were busy in their confident boastings of success, anticipating as they did, this visit as the climax of their victory, believing, and telling the people, that then they would have their will‡; they would get the New Church opened for all who joined them, and that the Minister and his followers would be cut off. How they were always so confident about the issue, is not now a matter of conjecture. We pity and forgive the Faction-leader. We forgive also his friends, "the members of presbytery," but we cannot too strongly reprobate their conduct.

The Congregation were also active. An Address of confidence in the Minister was prepared, and subscriptions from all quarters were adhibited to it. It was so numerously signed as to make it believed an impossibility that any Court, even a partial and unrighteous Court, could refuse to

* Two weeks before the Commission met at Caledonia, Dr. Burns, meeting some gentlemen in Hamilton, one of whom belonged to the Caledonia congregation, was told distinctly that it was the very reverse,—That the amendment by which the Resolutions were all negatived was carried triumphantly, and that the whole congregation, with the exception of the small faction, were determined to adhere to the Minister. On hearing this he lifted up his hands in astonishment; and said that the Synod had been made to believe it to be quite the contrary, and that on this account they had given the Commission such unlimited powers. This is perhaps a key to the whole conduct of the Commission at Caledonia, which we are about to describe, and, at all events, it seems to be one to the deception practised by the Faction-leader. Can this account for the fact, that when the Commission found they could not separate the Minister from the people who were so strongly united to each other and to him, that rather than lose their object they unceremoniously separated him from the Presbyterian Church?

† This is not our own opinion alone, but that of Ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church who have expressed it to us, and we believe it will be found the general opinion where the subject is understood.

‡ In this, and many other manifestations, there was abundant evidence that members of the Presbytery and the Faction were in correspondence.

yield to its influence. Indeed, it was a complete and signal triumph over the faction, inasmuch as it should have silenced their clamour, should have undeceived the Synod's Commission, and should have led to the very opposite course from that which had been meditated.

The meeting of the Commission took place on the 9th of July 1850, at Caledonia. There were only four of them present, two ministers and two Elders, (all, though from different causes, very incompetent judges.) But such a meeting was never before witnessed by any who were present, and it has sunk the Presbyterian Church in the estimation of many. It was felt then, what it has since literally proved to be, as another *Mare Magnum*, headed by Dr. Burns like the former, in the laying of the foundation of a New Church in Caledonia. The meeting, indeed, baffles all description, but it has left impressions on the public mind which will require a generation to erase.

The Commission were authorized to meet the Minister and Session, and then the Congregation. But instead of following the instructions given them, not the Minister and Session merely, but the Building Committee and other parties were called in, and it was with difficulty they would admit the very elders who had been judges in the cause.

It was understood, it was reasonably and necessary to understand, that the commission were to converse privately with the Session and Minister, with the spiritual overseers of the Congregation, who from their position should have been confided in, and who from their thorough acquaintance with the subject would have been able to set the matter in a clear light before the minds of the Commissioners, and prepared them to come to a righteous decision, showing that the Session and Congregation at large were only standing on the defensive, and seeking to discharge their duty with fidelity. But this opportunity was not afforded, any disposition by them, to speak on the subject was met by rude opposition and false statement, and the Commission were no wiser when they ended than when they began. It was perfectly evident that the Commission had made up their minds to a course which they were determined if possible to follow, and that they were unwilling to receive any information or hear any argument, which might drive them from that course. It was quite apparent that they studiously shut their eyes to every fact and particular which might have shown them that they were favouring the disturbers of the Congregation's peace at the expense of the orderly, the peaceable, and the conscientious.

In this preliminary meeting the Commission, with all their deeply rooted prejudices, with all their seeming eagerness to entrap and ensnare with all their visible terror to look at the real grounds of difficulty and agitation in the Congregation, and their manifest determination to turn aside from the straight course, and take up irrelevant matter, entered not on the object for which they were sent at all, but endeavoured to quarrel anew with us on points which should have been settled elsewhere, and which it was the Synod's own fault that they were not fully settled.

When the private meeting was over the commission adjourned to the place of worship. Dr. Burns opened the meeting with prayer. Some papers were read as before, one with a variety of questions of no importance, and trifling charges all founded on gossip and misrepresentation; and another about the Sabbath School, which the Faction had lately got up, and seeming to be a piece of deception from beginning to end. Dr. Burns then proceeded with an Address in which he stated what had been done at the private meeting, and then went on with a long harangue, in which it was his evident design to try to draw off the affections of the people from their Minister, and to endeavour to produce a want of confidence, as if almost convinced already that the allegations of want of

confidence were false, and thus indicating also his learning to the side of the disturbers of the Congregation's peace, and his desire to support and bear them out. He had taken for granted, like the Presbytery, that these disturbers had a good cause, and must be vindicated, and his great aim seemed to be to divide the ranks of the peopfe, and to draw them over to the sideof the Faction. Instead of trying to investigate the causes of strife or division alleged to exist, Dr. Burns' objection seemed to be to stir up strife and division where there were none. As the people justly remarked it seomed to be his intention to induce them to quarrel with their Minister. His design was so marked that the people felt themselves insulted, and the very opposite effests were produced from what were intended.—He made, and could make no impression of the kind he wished. The people saw his drift and despised it. They thought he took a most extraordinary method to discover the causes of trouble in the Congregation. for finding them so firmly united to their Minister, and to each other, he seemed to try to create trouble and discord among them in order to have the merit of discovering it.

The whole purport of his speech, as in his *Mare Magnum* reveries, was to make it believed that we held very exceptionable sentiments on the Establishment Principle ; and, in particular, as connected therewith on the Headship of Christ, which according to recent developemonts of the Synod, is only another name for the Establishment Principle.

He further attempted to show that our views on this subject were widely different from those of the Brethren of the Presbyterian Church, and asserted that there was not a man s[illegible]ng them throughout the length and breadth of the land, who held them but ourselves. This is known to be incorrect. Not to say that a good many of the Ministers hold similar views, we have the Pamphlet of the Rev. Mr. Esson. The same views are exhibited there by this learned and excellent Professor in Knox's College.* It is an outrage on cool judgment and reasoning, it is a disgraceful violation of the principles of integrity and truth, for any man to present us, and hundreds of thousands who think with us, as holding principles opposed to the Word of God, or even to the Westminster Standards, with the solitary exception always understood.

Did Dr. Burns really suppose that he, a stranger, and not presenting himself in a prepossessing attitude, would mislead or deceive the people of Caledonia Congregation by such extravagant representations? What did the people care about him, or his uncourteous and extraneous declarations, in comparison with a righteous adjustment of the grounds of alleged strife in the congregation, which the Commissioners were there to investigate, but on which they never entered? This harangue had no connexion with the business assigned to the Commission. The Congrega-

* We regret that this valuable Tract is not better known. It presents our views with power and plainness, and in a spirit the most conciliatory. How the Synod can consistently forbear with this author and others who advocate our principles, they are best able to explain The following are a few quotations:—

"The mighty heresy, the *Magnum Mare* of voluntary unbelief, seems to be neither more nor less than the insisting upon the previous necessity of imparting faith and spiritual belief to the souls of men of the world—men out of Christ—before we go on to exact from them the performance of any duties or services whatever to the Church or to its Divine Head. It is palpably absurd to require from an unconverted world—from unregenerate men—any service, in the hope of its being acceptable to God, or propitious to the prosperity of true religion. It is absolutely inverting the order of reason and nature, as well as of the Gospel revelation, whose language is 'believe and live'—'believe and do'—'believe and profess ; but to reverse this order and say, first profess and then believe,—recognize the Headship of Christ over the Church and over the nations. before ye have known Him whom the Father hath sent, or believed in Him, and mbraced Him as the one mediator between God and man, is absurd, is a real practical contradiction. Here, let it be observed, lies the whole ground and stress of the heavy charge of social infidelity, of unchristianizing nations and rulers—that has very unwarrantably, and, we must add, somewhat rudely and indecently been thrown upon the voluntaries. Do they oppose the conversion of the world? Do they frown upon the cause of Missions? Are they less zealous than their brethren who hold the

tion had been insulted, and unjustly used by a faction headed by one man. This Commission came to enquire into the facts of the case, and to quell the disturbance; but instead of trying to do this, which would have been an easy matter, they tried all they could to divide and stir up strife where there was none, and to encourage and patronize this one man, and those who, with him, had attempted to injure or destroy the Congregation.

When it was affirmed that want of confidence existed towards the Minister, in the absence of all proof, and in the face of multifarious and powerful disproof, and when there could not be more than three persons present, in a very crowded meeting, who would venture to maintain it, it appeared to be believed by the Commission, and although the whole Congregation besides denied the fact, and called for proof, and offered further refutation, they were disregarded.

From the commencement of the meeting the people had both visibly and audibly indicated their firm adherence to the Minister, in opposition to this paltry faction; and had the Commission not been blinded and infatuated by prejudice, they would not only have acknowledged it, but have thereby been restrained from their procedure; and they would have fixed at once on the true and only originator of the alleged strife, and dealt out to him the faithful and indignant reproof which he deserved. The Commission, indeed, were obliged at times to acknowledge the affectionate and faithful manifestations of the people—"O, we like to see, and cannot restrain such indications," said the Chairman, "of attachment to your Minister. He is worthy of them all. But, but, but he is a Voluntary!"*

Again and again it was asked, in what were the sentiments of their Minister, different from what they were when he was received and inducted. Again and again it was affirmed by persons present that they had heard him take exception to the Confession of Faith when the second question of the Formula was put, and that the Presbytery had expressed their approbation of the answers he had given. Again and again it was affirmed that there was no want of confidence, but the reverse, and that they had never heard a word, either in public or private, from him of his views as different from those of this church. Again and again it was stated that from the very time that want of confidence was said to begin, the Congregation had doubled its strength and had been ever since steadily and progressively increasing. Again and again it was stated that the Congregation was collected from Presbyterians of all denominations, and were chiefly from the United Presbyterian Church. And again and again it was declared that they had not come there to discuss the Voluntary Question, but to have the cause of division, if division existed, ascertained, and the distubers of their peace detected, exposed, and punished as they deserved, and that it was known, and visible to a demonstration, where alone the evils had originated, and to whom they were confined. But all these efforts of a generous but insulted people were met with evasion and disrespect by the Commission.

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* We do not vouch for the exact words, but this was the spirit of them.

Establishment principle in seeking to win souls to Christ? Is this the *Magnum Mare* of their infidelity, that they believe that the Gospel of Christ is *the power* as well as *the wisdom of God unto salvation*, to every one that believeth? That its own spiritual energy, and the mighty power of God's Spirit working *therein, therewith, thereby*, is able exceeding abundantly to overcome the world—to become more than victorious over it and all the enemies of Christ? That its own spiritual armoury is an exhaustless magazine of itself, abundantly sufficient for the achievement of its final and universal triumph? Convert the princes, rulers, and law-givers of this world, and then, and not till then, expect them to become true and trustworthy protectors and patrons of the Church. The kings and rulers, the states and parliaments, of this world, must first be made kings and priests unto God, and his Christ

A paper with twenty-one names, which had been put into the hands of the Commission, with false insinuations, as evidence of disaffection, was considered a good nucleus for a congregation of more faithful adherents than we and our numerous followers, to the peculiarities of this Presbyterian Church. We know it to be otherwise, and we know that compared with every name that paper contains, there are many more on the side of the Congregation who have their affections strongly fixed on this Church, and some who have sacrificed their wordly interests for its sake. Yet this small list was hailed as a precious document by the Commission. But when in opposition to this, a document was presented, with resistless demonstration, of full confidence in the Minister, and firm adherence to him, by between three and four hundred signatures, of persons all under his pastoral charge, to which, it longer time had been taken, some hundred more names might have been obtained, expressing in an Address their determination to adhere to him, the force even of this powerful occular proof was attempted to be evaded by Dr. Burns. This, however, required much dexterity, and few besides himself could have had the assurance to try to brave so seemingly resistless an argument.

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before they can be accepted or trusted as the nursing fathers of the Church. To invite or accept their patronage in their unconverted state, what is it but to commit the sheep to the tender mercies of the wolves?"

"All that the Church has to ask of the State is, not to hinder in any way her own free and proper action. She scarcely needs to invoke the aid or patronage of the powers of the world, whose communion and influence are sure, as all experience and history testify, to corrupt her purity, to weaken her power, and to mar her working: in fine to prove to her, at least, what Saul's armour was to David, *a cumbrous constraint*."

"To require of the magistrate, to make the word of God the supreme rule and standard of his own principles and actions, is *altogether reasonable and right*. Here there is no room for any limitation or compromise. But to require of him to incorporate its holy precepts and ordinances with the laws and statutes of human enactment, or to enforce, by his official authority, the reception of the Bible as the word of God, or the sanctification of the Sabbath, or the religious observance of any Divine ordinances, were infinitely unreasonable and absurd."

"The duty of the recognition of Christ's headship by men in their national capacity, or as members of a commonwealth, placed under God's ordinance of civil government, imposes a recognition of Christ as mediator and as God; in other words, implies a belief in Christianity; or, which is more, if it be of any worth, the true faith of a christian, and where such belief or faith exists, it will and must be followed by the due recognition of Christ's headship in this two-fold relation, as its proper fruit. But to say that it is a duty to recognize what is not believed, and still more, what is not known or apprehended, is palpably absurd—is a contradiction in terms. There can be no rational recognition of Christ's headship over the Nation or over the Church, that does not pre-suppose, that the majority at least of the people have, *individually and personally* received and embraced Christ as their Saviour; and if this be so—if even the majority are in this blessed state, it is impossible that the nation shall not make the recognition in question, in the only way in which it can be acceptable to God, or indeed not absolutely abnorrent to his nature and revealed will; nay, more, in all its acts, and laws and administrations, if the spirit of the nation be truly and thoroughly christian, will, and must be so, too, for, "make the tree good and its fruit will be good also."

"Let us now ask, which of these views and principles, as set forth in opposition to each other, would be most likely to serve the cause of religion, to promote the glory of God, and to ensure the speedy and universal triumph of the Gospel. Suppose at this day that all the States and Governments of the world were "to take order that the truth of God" (as understood and held by them severally) "be kept pure and entire" (see Confession of Faith 23rd chapter,) is it doubtful what would be the consequence? Brahmanism, Buddhism, Mahomedanism, Popery, Erastianism, Puseyism, would certainly be mighty gainers: but let the advocates of State connexion themselves say, what true religion would reap as the fruits of this principle, reduced to immediate and universal practice. Suppose on the other hand, that the principle of non-interference of the magistrate with religion, were universally acted upon, so that he should have nothing to do with the consciences of his subjects, except to secure to them perfect freedom and to give full scope to truth and right to run and have free course and be glorified, then would China, Japan, India, and all Pagan, Mahommdan, and Popish nations, be opened to the beneficent influences of knowledge, science and civilization, and above all, to the light of the glorious Gospel. Then, many would run to and fro, and knowledge would increase—the heralds of the cross would find everywhere a wide and effectual door opened to them—a free and abundant entrance would be secured for truth, human and Livine,—'*magna est veritas et prevalebit*.' If practice and experience be the best test of truth, is it questionable to which of those principles, now under review, the preference is to be given? Enough, we deem, perhaps our readers will deem more than enough has been already advanced, to enable the candid, unbiassed, intelligent christian to judge for himself, how far the views of our voluntary brethren have been justly appreciated or fairly represented."

The following are copies of the Address and Reply:—

ADDRESS.

CALEDONIA, 5th June, 1850.

REV. SIR,—We, the undersigned communicants, connected with the Congregation in Caledonia and vicinities, are of opinion that the present position of the affairs of the Congregation, connected with recent events (which are now in a great measure familiar to all of us), think this a suitable time to come forward and express what we believe we will be borne out in stating, by the community at large, that we have the most implicit confidence in you as a Minister of the Gospel, and we bear willing testimony to your laborious zeal in the cause of Christ, and to the great measure of success that has, by the blessing of God, attended your ministry among us.

We would also avail ourselves of this opportunity of expressing to you our heartfelt sympathy with yourself and family, in the very trying circumstances in which you have been placed by the acts of a few individuals, with whom we have little in common; and to assure you that you may calculate on our adherence and support, irrespective of denominational peculiarities, as heretofore, as long as it may please the great Disposer of events to permit your Ministry among us.

We, the undersigned, adherents of the Congregation of Caledonia and vicinities, wholly concur in the statements expressed above, and we have reason to believe that similar sentiments are held by the community at large.

REPLY.

SALEM COTTAGE, Near Caledonia, 5th July, 1850.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,—With much pleasure I have listened to your very kind and encouraging Address, and I beg to assure you that I highly estimate the cordial expressions of respect and confidence in which so many have combined, and the affectionate assurances you give of your co-operation with me on principles so congenial to the spirit of christian charity. Your appropriate and seasonable communication is the more valuable and comforting, both as it is unmerited, and as it was unexpected. It is indeed matter of regret that a root of bitterness should have sprung up in the Congregation, and this is the more mysterious as we cannot possibly conjecture what is its real origin, and how it should have so suddenly and unexpectedly burst out amongst us, and presented so many features dis-similar to the Gospel of the meek and lowly Jesus. But if that God who can make the wrath of man to praise him, overrule these things for uniting us more together in the bonds of Christian love, although we cannot but mourn over the fall of some who were once our friends, and if he thereby prompt us to more combined and zealous efforts for his glory, and our own salvation, there will be abundant reason for us to bless and magnify His holy name.

Dear Brethren and Friends, I am sensible of many defects in discharging my ministerial duties, especially from the extent of the sphere over which you are scattered, and I seek your continued indulgence, and an increase of your prayers. But I can assure you that my heart is always with you, that my supplications are daily directed to God for your salvation, and that I have much pleasure in my endeavours to labour, as grace enables, for your spiritual good. May God unite us more closely by spiritual ties on earth, and may we all at length meet around Immanuel's Throne in Heaven.

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

With much gratitude for your kind attentions heretofore, and for the encouraging assurances you now express, and which I beg you will communicate to those whom you represent, I remain,

Your affectionate Pastor,

ANDREW FERRIER.

The Address, with its long list of names, was startling to the Commission. They were not prepared for any thing of the kind, and appeared not to know what to do. For, supposing as they did, from the officious misrepresentations of the leader of the faction, whom they had been too willing to believe, that he was supported in his attempt to carry his scheme by almost the whole Congregation, this document was a complete destruction of the hypothesis. Indeed it presented the matter as being precisely the reverse of what they had supposed. The Address, with so many signatures, should have sisted all further procedure, and turned at once the attention of the Commissioners to the real origin of the supposed strife. Yes, if they had been sufficiently honest, just, and generous here—if they had not been determined on a purpose of their own—they would immediately have turned upon the faction-leader and have said—"Ah, Sir, you have deceived us, you alone are the cause of strife in the Congregation, you would set us up against the Minister and people, who are united in love his as firmly as any Congregation in the Church, when you yourself are the detected agitator of all this strife." But no, this was too much, if not for the understandings and the hearts of the Commissioners, yet too much for their prejudices. Yes, prejudice—prejudice to the Establishment Principle—a principle not of God but of man—a principle not of religion but of the world—a principle not of reason but of pride—prejudice destroys the generous feelings of the heart, and the honest convictions of the mind.

It was almost amusing to look at Dr. Burns' countenance and manner, and at his dexterous management, when he read this address and reply. "Oh! yes, yes" said he, "this is very true. Your Minister is all that is here stated. He is a sound divine. He preaches Calvinistic doctrine. He is no Morisonian. He is evangelical. But, but, he is a Voluntary. He holds doctrines on the Headship of Christ which are different from us, and we consider our views on this point as of essential importance."

There was here a new, an artful, a strenuously wrought attempt to shake the confidence of the people in their Minister, and to turn their affections from him. But the people were firm like the rock, and manifested an eagerness and resoluteness to bring the matter to a point—to test by a vote their opposition to the faction, and they declared themselves certain that nineteen-twentieths, even of Caledonia Congregation, were determined to adhere to their Minister. This they indicated with an interest and earnestness which, had the Commissioners not been under the strongest prejudice, and the deepest delusion, they would have rejoiced to acknowledge.

There was not a whisper of want of confidence at the time it was said to begin, but on the contrary the place of worship was, every Sabbath, then and thereafter, crowded to excess. Many had occasionally to retire for want of room, bnt never did a single person withdraw from want of confidence. The idea was never heard of till nearly a year after the publication, when it was expressed by the faction-leader, who, if he felt it sooner, had been concealing it under the mask of friendship, to whom, till the time of expressing it, it was, so far as it was known, entirely confined, yet who had the vanity to think he could speak for the whole congregation with the certainty of obtaining a pusillanimous response. In opposition, however, to such an insinuation, arising we know, not from truth, but from deceit, not from principle, but from spleen, we

have the spontaneous Address of hundreds, who unite with heart and hand in expressing their full confidence, and their warmest love.*

One would have thought that with this palpable evidence every attempt to shuffle and to tamper would have ceased, and that the Commissioners would have turned the edge of their weapons on the small faction creating thus unnecessarily so great a tumult to gratify only their own caprice, or rather, to feed and flatter the pride of one worldly man, for whom the unity, the strength, and even the existence of the Congregation must be sacrificed. But no: although every thing they now did appeared constrained and unnatural, yet the faction, consisting of, we may say, Residuaries, and even Voluntaries, and we question if there be a genuine Free Church-man among them, are regarded as the Synod's friends, and the whole Congregation besides must have their rights and liberties invaded.

Seeing now it was impossible to finish their business, the Commission seemed disposed to wind up the matter the best way they could, and close the meeting. The place had been crowded, and many had stood at the door and windows who could not get in, but now there were not more than twenty or thirty present, the mass of the people having by this time retired in disgust. The few remaining became impatient, and wished the opinion of the house to be tested by a vote. But this the Commissioners had the policy to refuse, by adopting in preference a counter-motion, which the leader of the faction made, and who seemed much afraid at the proposal, being already greatly humbled and mortified. The meeting was closed, although nothing was done: and here ended this extraordinary scene, the like of which Caledonia, and perhaps no other place, ever witnessed before; and which few, if any, would have anticipated from a Presbyterian court. It is hoped for the credit of the Ministry, for the honour of the Church, and for the glory of Christ, that such a transaction will never be witnessed here or elsewhere again. O! if it could be prevented we would say,—"Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

Many remarks were made about Dr. Burns, and his manner of conducting the meeting. When any of the faction spoke, he was all attention; but when any rose on the Congregation's side, he began to shuffle among his papers, and to seem to take no notice. It was was well remarked that he acted in the whole scene as judge, jury, and witness. He both put and answered the questions. He listened indeed to the faction, but he paid little or no attention the people. He was almost continually speaking himself, according to his well known foible; and in this case he was evidently desirous of killing time by speaking. At length the whole evening was spent, without entering on the object for which the Commission was sent. "These Ministers," it was said, "are excellent at special pleading, and would make capital lawyers."—"Dr. Burns," it was remarked, "was like an advocate who had the wrong side of the case, but who, having got a good fee, was determined in opposition to all reason and justice, to gain the cause of his client." Certainly such proceedings were unworthy of Ministers, or of any man pretending to christian principle, or even what would be considered honourable conduct by the world. With one of the best opportunities of giving an impulse to the interests of religion, and of infusing vigour into their Congregation in this place, it was not embraced, and they did all they could to bring discredit upon themselves, and expose the denomination to which they belong. Many congregations, like our own, which are greatly made up of United Presbyterians, may well take warning from the overbearing treatment which the Congregation here have received from this reckless Commission of the Presbyterian Synod, and

* It is not denied that some who subscribed the Address proved unfaithful.—1. JOHN, ii 19

the Synod itself, after this and other warnings, might learn that there is at least one on this Commission whom they may safely trust on an embassy to create strife, but never on one to heal it.

After the extraordinary meeting in Caledonia, nothing more was heard of the designs of the Commission till the August number of the Ecclesiastical Record appeared, where they announced a meeting in Hamilton on the 13th of that month. They had no authority to meet in Hamilton, or to meet at all for the object for which it afterward appeared this meeting was called. They were appointed to enquire into the state of the Caledonia Congregation, which they had not done when they were here, and which could be done no where else. But they seem to have been afraid to venture to meet again on the spot, lest some additional facts might be forced upon them, which would tend to frustrate their sinister purpose. They forgot the object and character of their Commission altogether, and held a clandestine meeting in Hamilton; and there, by an impious stretch of Ecclesiastical jurisdiction, liker a Popish than a Protestant Court, liker the thunders of the Vatican than any deliverance which a sound Presbyterian Church could sanction, they proceeded in the absence of all parties, and especially of the principal party, who had not the smallest conception of their intention, or of its practicability, who had not been even told his offence, and presented with the opportunity of defending himself, if he had thought that worth while, or of protesting, if that would be allowed, against any precipitate and unprecedented measure, to declare that the Minister of the Congregation of Caledonia and vicinities was no longer a Minister of their Church.

This deliverance, all circumstances considered, is perhaps unparalled. The following is its tenor:—

"The Commissioners having calmly reviewed the whole proceedings, did unanimously, and by virtue of the authority given them by the Synod, adopt the following resolutions:—

"First—They find it altogether unnecessary to refer the case back to the Presbytery, to be proceeded with by libel, seeing that Dr. F.'s sentiments are matters of publication, and are duly acknowledged by him.*

"Secondly—That the sentiments in question† are, in the opinion of the Commissioners, directly contrary to the Word of God, and to the Standards of this Church, and highly pernicious, in their character and tendency.

"Thirdly—That Dr. F. in avowedly holding these sentiments, cannot be considered as adhering to the Standards of that Church to which he has sworn allegiance.‡

"Wherefore the Commission did, and hereby do declare, that Dr. F. is no longer a Minister in communion with the Presbyterian Church of Canada, and they by this minute exclude him from the rights and privileges connected with relationship to that Church, and appoint a notice of this finding to be sent to the Presbytery of Hamilton, that they may adopt the steps usual in such cases as the present.

"The Commissioners further recommend to the Presbytery, if they shall see cause, to adopt measures for opening the New Church at Caledonia, next Lord's day, in connexion with the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

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* But they dare not quote them.

† What are the sentiments in question? They cannot name them.

‡ How uncandid is this statement! We swore no allegiance to the Standards where they teach compulsory and persecuting principles in religion, and in everything to which we assented we have been faithful, as the headstrong framers of these preposterous resolutions very well know.

"They further appoint a copy of these minutes and instructions to be sent to Dr. F., duly subscribed by the Chairman and Clerk, in name of the whole Commissioners."*

This deliverance, with accompanying mis-representations, was industriously circulated, and acted on by the Commission and Presbytery, in all the Congregations of our charge, and published in the Record, before it was announced to ourselves.† When we first heard of it we said in the words of our venerated connexion, that illustrious martyr, the Rev. James Guthrie of Stirling, when his sentence was announced to him—"May this deliverance never affect the Commission more than it does us."

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* As soon as this deliverance was publicly known, the Rev. Thomas Dickson, a respectable, honourably minded, and conscientious Preacher of the Free Church, addressed a letter to the Clerk of the Presbytery in whose bounds he was, of which the following is the tenor—"To the Rev. J.W. Smith, Grafton. Dear Sir. In common with the United Presbyterian Church I *continue* to hold "that christianity should be left to maintain and propagate itself in the world through the medium of the unrestrained exertions of those who believe it, accompanied by the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, exactly in the same way as it did during the first three centuries, before any civil establishment existed." (Dr. McKerrow's history of the Secession Church.) The decision of the Synod's Committee in the case of Dr. Ferrier debars me from continuing in my present connexion. I therefore hereby withdraw from your communion, and decline taking any further appointments in the Presbyterian Church of Canada. You will have the goodness to lay this letter before the Presbytery at your earliest convenience. I Remain,

REV. SIR,

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) THOMAS DICKSON."

Cobourg, 27th August, 1850.

Mr, Dickson was soon after this received into the United Presbyterian Church, in connexion with which he now labours with great acceptance and efficiency. He is now under call to Caledon, where a wide field of labour is presented, and where, through God's blessing, he may be the instrument of good to many souls. It may be proper to mention that prior to this he had hesitation about continuing in the Free Church, into which it appears that, like ourselves, he had been admitted taking exception to the clauses in the Confession which gives unwarranted power to the civil magistrate in matters of religion. Accordingly, he had addressed a letter to the Synod at its meeting in June, 1850, which was reported there, but owing to conciliatory persuasions, and hopes expressed by brethren, that the existing agitation on the question of the magistrate's power would soon be satisfactorily settled, he deferred acting on it till the deliverance of the Caledonia Commission was announced. The following is a copy of the letter referred to:

"*To the Moderator and other members of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, to meet at Toronto on the 5th June*, 1850.

REVEREND FATHERS AND BRETHREN,

It is well known to many of the members of Synod, that I have been always strongly attached to the great principle of perfect religious liberty. I need scarcely say that I have never concealed or compromised my principles in regard to this matter. Before receiving license I stated to the Presbytery of Kingston that I could not approve of those parts of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which seemed to me to teach compulsory, or persecuting and intolerant principles in religion. I then felt, and I now feel more strongly than ever, that my position in the Presbyterian Church of Canada, is somewhat anomalous. I therefore beg leave, with the greatest deference, to state to your reverend body, that I feel constrained, by the most solemn convictions of duty, to seek the renewal of my connexion with a Church [viz., the United Presbyterian] where harmony will not be disturbed by the expression of my views. For these reasons, and others which might have been assigned, I hereby humbly request that you would be pleased to furnish me with a certificate, or statement of my standing in the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

I am, Rev. Fathers and Brethren,

Faithfully yours,
[Signed] THOMAS DICKSON."

Toronto, C. W., 5th June, 1850.

These documents are most honourable to their writer, and shew him to be, what all who have the pleasure of his acquaintance know,—a preacher of the Gospel of enlightened views and sterling conscientiousness. There are others in the Presbyterian Church, holding the same sentiments, who would honour themselves and honour their Divine Master, by imitating this example.

Christ has of late been so grievously wounded in this House of His friends that it seems to be no safe or comfortable residence for those who, rejecting the anti-Christian doctrine of a civil establishment of religion, would retain unsullied the Royal Prerogatives of Christ, and the spiritual purity, and glory of His Kingdom.

† We exculpate Dr. Burns here. He wrote a private letter announcing what was done, which probably he intended should reach us before the Sabbath, but which did not arrive till the Wednesday following.

It appears from this deliverance that we are excluded from the Presbyterian Church entirely on account of certain published sentiments, which are said to be contrary to the Word of God, and highly pernicious in their character and tendency. Now let it be noticed that neither this Commission, nor the Presbytery, nor the Synod, have ever pretended to specify what these sentiments are, and that, judging from the vague generalities in which they have ever wrapt up their meaning, they are not able to point out one sentence or expression, published by us, which is not thoroughly sound and scriptural. We might well call upon them to quote our words, and to do it fairly; but this they cannot do, or the whole of enlightened Christendom would reprobate their conduct. We are thus condemned without being convicted, and without even knowing what it is, in our published sentiments, that this Church can possibly challenge. We simply hold Voluntary sentiments. They knew this when they received us. We are not different in any one sentiment now, and they have exceeded their prerogative, and stultified themselves by excluding us from their Church for this. The Presbyterian Church would be stigmatized as unjust and tyrannical were they to acknowledge this to be the case, and although it is nothing else, yet they try to mystify the matter by a multitude of words, and to make it supposed that we hold pernicious errors. Some of their Ministers, in consequence, have been warning our people to beware of permitting their affection to their Pastor to interfere with the Salvation of their souls. Really this is allowing fondness for the Establishment Principle to upset their judgment, and to pervert the best feelings of their hearts. We have ever been acknowledged as a thoroughly Evangelical Minister, seeking to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified; and it would be honourable for this Presbyterian Church, it would shelter it in some measure from the charge of wounding Christ in the house of His friends, to disclaim its sympathy with the Commission in such groundless accusations, and in the deliverance to which they have come. We defy every one of them to show that we ever published error on any one occasion, except it be an error to maintain that the Redeemer's Church is absolutely free and independent, and that the civil Magistrate has no right to interfere in his official capacity with its doctrines and administration.

In the minutes which accompany the report of this deliverance there are several false statements, which are not worthy of notice. But as immediately after this deliverance copies of these minutes, in a printed circular, were industriously distributed throughout the different Congregations and Stations of our charge, being the same report of the case that is presented in the September number of the Ecclesiastical Record, it is necessary to make a few remarks. We can conceive of no good reason for dispersing these, but if it were from any desire to justify the Commission in their "strange act," it seems to us to have been the worst method of doing it. No document could have been brought before the public better fitted to condemn their procedure, and none more calculated to vindicate us and our Congregation. A passing view of its principal references, so far as not already noticed, will throw additional light on the whole subject which it is the object of this Tract to present.

The Sabbath School Teachers are exhibited as disapproving of our sentiments. This is not true; nor is it true that the Sabbath School Teachers gave in any paper. They had a paper but did not give it in, for the matter about the Sabbath School, like that on other Congregational points, was not taken up. If it had, the commissioners might have been confounded and ashamed at having been imposed upon by the insolence of those calling themselves Superintendent and Teachers of the Sabbath School. These were the Faction, or their followers, who had

seized the Sabbath School Library, and in a profane and disorderly manner had formed an opposition Sabbath School of their own, whilst the regular Congregational Sabbath School was going on and flourishing.

At the close of the next paragraph it is said that we could not give the persons concerned a place in our affections. This is not true. We are commanded by Christ to "love our enemies and to bless them that curse us," and this we would wish to exemplify. We only said we would read a document at the instance of the Commission, but, as we could not approve of its tenor, so we could not read it with cordiality.

The Commissioner's "opinion that the main cause of difference in the congregation was to be found in the publication of certain views of doctrine by us, and our subsequent actings there-anent," was completely disproved, and their eagerness to hold this utter falsehood, seems to show their settled determination to dart upon us on account of our views on the civil magistrate's power in matters of religion.

On the next paragraph, referring to a letter to the Commission in October 1849, it may be remarked that that letter, which is inserted,* is plain enough, and required no such explanation as was sought. It expresses no wish on our part to assert our views on the subject of difference, for we are not in the practice of doing this even in private, and we have never done it in public. But as the Synod permitted the principles of the United Presbyterian Church to be attacked and misrepresented (which we have never on any year been there without witnessing) we hold it as our right, if not our duty, to repel and expose all such uncharitable conduct. Was this not perfectly reasonable? And does it say much for a Church which needs thus to be kept in check, or which should think it might be permitted to slander other denominations equally honourable with their own, without being called in question.

The next paragraph is true, and it is enough to condemn the Commission. We joined this Church, and were inducted, avowedly holding the same views we have held for thirty years. We could not certainly unite with them, as they know well, where they differ from the United Presbyterian Church on the power of the civil magistrate, and where we conscientiously believe they are in darkness and error—although, as we have always said, we do not regard their views of sufficient importance to divide the christian Church. To hold their principles as far as they are in unison with those of the United Presbyterian Church, is to go very far with them, as far as was satisfactory at the time, and should be so still.

The Commission seem to be at a loss for matter of accusation, when they bring in the Thanksgiving day appointed by the Governor, especially at the instance of the disturber of our congregational peace. The Congregation had held a Thanksgiving day, through virtue of the Synod's appointment, on the very week before, and we then presided in the services; but we never considered it our duty to obey civil rulers in spiritual things. The Governor might as well appoint us and our Congregation to keep the Lord's Supper as to engage in Thanksgiving. If, in future, he will simply recommend, we shall promptly respond.—The day in question was expressed as an appointment in the paper we read. Some of those who brought forward this matter had their Stores open all that day, and were known to be elsewhere giving orders to their workmen in prosecuting their usual labour.

We were heard, it is said, at great length on all the bearings of the case. This is not true. We were not restrained from speaking, but we said little, and scarcely a word on the bearings of the case; for it was never taken up. The main drift of the Commission being to criminate us, we pre-

* See p. 20.

ferred to imitate our Divine Master, who, when by false witnesses, he was accused of many things, yet "answered nothing."

"The Commissioners were all of one mind on every point." So much the more to their disgrace, that not one of them had candour and spirit to dissent from such sinister proceedings, which any man not under debasing prejudice, and with but a spark of honourable decision, would have scorned to sanction.

Next in the circular we have the quotation from the minutes of Presbytery in 1845 and 1846, referring to our admission into the Presbyterian Church, and our induction into our pastoral charge. The commission could not have taken a more effectual method, than by these quotations, to vindicate us, and to expose and condemn the Presbytery and themselves.

It appears that the Presbytery at our admission, recorded "their full satisfaction with our Theological views, and that though we differed somewhat as to the duty of nations and governments in regard to the support of the Gospel, there was nothing in our opinion which should prevent our being admitted." Here, then, there is distinctly mentioned the quintessence of the Voluntary Question, in which we differ from this Presbytery. We deny that it is the duty of nations and governments to make a compulsory provision for the Ministers of Christ, because this is the duty of the Church, and not of the nation—that is we dissent, as we told them, from those parts of the Confession of Faith which would warrant this, and of course as they well knew, from all the civil interference with the Church which the sages allow to the Magistrate; and as Dr Burns told the Synod in 1849, it only showed the ignorance of the Hamilton Presbytery, if they did not know that this involved the whole question between the friends and opponents of the civil establishments of religion. In nothing else did we differ, it it said, from this Presbytery. It ought to have been said, in nothing else did we differ from the Westminster Standards. This was true then and is equally true still.

Again it appears, that the same Presbytery soon afterwards recorded that there were "satisfactory" answers obtained to the Formula. Now the Presbytery know, the Congregation know, and the Synod in their minute quoted in the circular allow, that we took exception to the usual formula on the second question, which requires an unqualified assent to the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith, by saying distinctly in the hearing of the members of Presbytery, and of the whole Congregation, that we received the Westminster Standards as the Confession of our Faith, "excepting where they taught, or might be supposed to teach, compulsory and persecuting principles in religion." And yet, according to this minute, satisfactory answers were obtained from us. This is perfectly conclusive. The two minutes of Presbytery are sufficient to vindicate us in preserving our consistency at these times, and ever since, with our original ordination vows; and they expose and condemn the Presbytery and this Commission, in their laboured yet fruitless attempts to throw blame on us. These minutes are triumphant at once in vindicating us, which they are adduced to expose, and in exposing the Commission, which they are now brought forward to vindicate. More might be said on this subject were it necessary.

But now for the Synod minute as quoted in the circular, in which these Commissioners express their entire concurrence.*

We claim no latitude, as it supposes, in impugning great principles of any description that are agreeable to reason, and the word of God, and so far as we know we have never done this, and it is notorious that nei-

* See Page 19, where it is given in full.

ther the Synod nor the Commission have ever shown by any of our words or sentiments that we have. But we claim every latitude in declaring on all proper occasions the whole counsel of God. It seems from this minute that the compulsory maintenance of a Gospel Ministry is a momentous bearing of the great principle of national duty and responsibility. What its other momentous bearings are we are not informed. But if they rank no higher than the one specified, if like this they have the characteristics of injustice and oppression, the sooner they are impugned and repudiated so much the better. God forbid that we should impugn any good thing entitled to the great epithet of momentous. We have called for proof. The Synod have given none, we believe, because they can give none. We have no fear of being thus challenged by a portion of what may be considered enlightened Christendom. As to the interpretation put upon our exception to the Confession, we have only to remark, that we are not in the habit, like some interpreters of the Standards, of saying one thing and meaning another.* We meant only what we said, and the Presbytery had no right to understand it in any other way,—That we receive these documents, excepting where they teach or may be supposed to teach, compulsory and persecuting principles in religion.

In the preamble to the [illegible]olution the Commission refer, the second time, to the letter we [illegible] of date 9th August. It is strong, indeed, but not more so than circumstances warranted. Those who heard it before it was sent, and had witnessed the unparallelled scene of injustice which it describes, declared it to be a faithful representation. The following is a copy :—

To the Rev. Dr. Burns, Toronto.

My Dear Sir:—Although I saw the notice in the Record of the meeting to which you refer, I did not mean to attend it, as I was not aware of having any personal case, as is there stated, the Commission being appointed for the Congregation. By your saying that a few lines from me will serve nearly the same purpose as my being forward, I infer that my presence is not necessary, and perhaps not wished.†

It would be well that the Commission had taken a deliberate *view* before speaking of taking "a deliberate *re*-view of the whole matter." For whatever may be their opinion as to what passed at Caledonia, it is viewed by all the serious and conscientous among us, as one of the most disgraceful proceedings in which any Commission could engage, who acted in the name of Christ; it is considered as a gross violation of all justice, and a perfect burlesque on all religion. With one of the best opportunities of vindicating an injured Session, and an insulted Congregation, and thereby giving an impulse to the interests of religion in this place, for a generation, you trampled upon, and were ready to sacrifice, the rights of a Christian people, as firmly united to each other and to their Minister as any Congregation in the whole Church, and this only to gratify the pride, spleen, and malice, of a mere worldling, who, with all his hypocritical and deceitful efforts to injure us, has been able to muster but twenty names of his own dependents and friends, against hundreds who would steadily adhere to you, and not a few of whom have suffered for conscience sake, in support of your principles. You shamefully overlooked facts which were brought forward, and would not listen to others as startling, which the people were ready to adduce, and you grasped at the falsehoods of the whole case, by which the Presbytery and yourselves have been hoodwinked. I speak not of myself, although none could have desired to preserve good brotherhood more sacredly,

* See p. p. 19, 20 foot Note.

† See copy of the letter to which this is a reply in Note Page 50.

since the subject of difference with the Synod has never once been hinted at either in public or in private, and forms no part of ministerial intercourse, although the contrary has been gratuitously supposed. But it may not be amiss to hint, in particular, that the idea by which the Presbytery and you have been so easily, yet so egregiously duped, of this stir having arisen out of dealings with me about the Headship of Christ, as if our faction were concerned about this, appears to us as one of the most solemn pieces of mockery and ridicule that can well be conceived, especially as the solitary disturber of our Congregational peace, is not supposed by the public here either to know or care any thing about the doctrine of Christ's Headship, but is believed, as has been quaintly, yet perhaps justly remarked, by one of your friends in Hamilton, to be seeking not Christ's Headship at all, but his own, being ambitious only to lord over and oppress this portion of God's heritage.

I request, in the name of my Session and Congregation, a copy of the minute of your meeting here, and a copy of your minute of the contemplated meeting in Hamilton. We wish to know exactly how things stand, for this is a matter on which, if necessary, a strong remonstrance will be made, and which, if not brought to a speedy and honourable conclusion, must become a stigma on the Synody ou represent, and an indelible stain on your section of the Presbyterian Church.

I am, my DEAR SIR,

Yours faithfully,

A. F.

CALEDONIA, 9th August, 1850.

This letter is said to indicate defiance of all Presbyterial order and control. There was nothing of the kind meant; and it is easy to put constructions on letters and other documents to serve a purpose, especially in seeking to escape from difficulty and blame. The letter is strong, indeed, but it is an unvarnished, and, after all, a very imperfect description of what happened; and all who witnessed the meeting of the Commission at Caledonia, and their actings there, if perhaps we except the faction, will attest its truth.

We wish we had a copy of the letter sent to this Commission by the two individuals referred to in their report, as it would serve further to show the state and feelings of the Congregation; but a copy was not preserved by its authors. There was, however, a third letter forwarded, being addressed to Dr. Burns, which, by some mistake, there is reason to think did not reach him. But in order to show that the views presented by us are no exaggerated description, it is entitled to a place here. It was written by a professional gentleman, who has the best opportunities of knowing the mind of the people, and is well able to form an accurate judgment of what has passed among us. The tenor of this letter is as follows:—

CALEDONIA, 12th August, 1850.

REV. SIR,—Your late visit to Caledonia must have convinced you that the private and *ex parte* statements of individuals, however respectable may lead to very wrong conclusions, and I have no doubt that you, and every member of Commission, will in future receive similar testimony *cum grano salis*. You must now be satisfied that the members of this Congregation, who support and sustain their Pastor against the machinations of a party among them, are not a set of ignorant and simple minded men, led by a Baptist and an Episcopalian. You must be convinced that the celebrated resolutions, of a certain individual, were not unanimously adopted by the Congregation, but on the contrary were unanimously disapproved of. You must be satisfied that the faction, not-

withstanding their great influence, could only muster twenty odd names whilst the Baptist and Episcopalian party had enrolled three hundred and fifty. No doubt you were equally surprised and pained to find your pre-conceived opinions so signally at fault in many other particulars, which it will not now be necessary to enumerate. I shall therefore at once proceed to inform you of a few facts, which I think it is of some importance that you should be made aware of, and which I am sorry to say are not very complimentary to yourself. In the first place you are considered by the people here to have been the last member of Synod who should have been appointed to the Commission, and in our judgment you should have declined. No decision given by you can carry any moral weight here, as it is well known that, on a former occasion, you were a principal in a controversy in which our Minister had some participation, and we have intelligence among us to be satisfied that the judgment delivered, let it be what it may, will differ materially from that given by the public in the controversy alluded to. We consider, from the little pains taken to elict the truth by the Presbytery of Hamilton, from their evident, and ill concealed prejudice against Dr. F., that we have not the slightest shadow of a chance of obtaining a righteous decision, or a fair hearing from the Commission as constituted. We would wish you and the other members of Commission, distinctly to understand that we are a united and prosperous congregation, who love and esteem our Pastor, who has gained golden opinions from the community at large by his mild and christian deportment, and by the firm stand he has lately taken against a faction who have signally failed in their intentions of sowing the seed of discord among his people. We also tell you, that after your signal failure in obtaining such testimony against Dr. F., as you were too sure of obtaining, previous to coming here, it would be in vain for you to come again on the same errand. Take Dr. F., up at once on those points in which you differ. Try him, and expel him from your body and a great majority of us will be obliged to you for so doing. But do not expect here to obtain anything to justify such a high-handed proceeding in the eyes of the religious community. No Sir, we are well aware that you expected to find sufficient matter of accusation against Dr. F., to justify you in removing him from his charge here, without falling back upon the Tower of Babel. You have signally failed in your expectations and as far as my opinion is concerned, and that of those with whom I have conversed, the Tower of Babel is your last resort. From your extraordinary proceedings, it was obvious to every person who listened to you, that the cause had been decided before you came here, which was made the more apparent by your invariable attempts to make it appear that discord arose with the publication of the Tower of Babel. This we emphatically deny; and the Faction signally failed in their attempts to prove it true. For months after its appearance none of the Congregation absented themselves from ordinances, but on the contrary the Congregation has continued since then, as before, steadily to increase; and even now, with the exception of the faction whom it was evident you delighted to honour, it continues united, as heretofore, in supporting, loving, and esteeming their Minister, as a faithful and zealous servant of the Redeemer. We hurl back with scorn the foul insinuation of the Commission, as to the motive which influenced some of Dr. F's. friends.—They are worthy of the individual with whom they originated, and they have signally failed in the effect intended.

We have thus far, in an honest and straight-forward manner, characterised proceedings unprecedented in the annals of justice, not to mention the annals of the Church. And, Rev. Sir, if the language is such as you are not in the habit of hearing, it is nevertheless true. You must hear it, and in another shape it will be heard from Gaspe to Sandwich, and it

may be farther. Why have the Presbytery, why have the Commission listened to *ex parte* statements? But above all, why have they acted upon these statements as if they were literally true? And why have you unmindful of your sacred office, as a Judge in Israel, expressed astonishment when contradictory and true statements were told you on a late occasion in Hamilton? How much more in harmony with justice would it have been, had you taken the trouble to have privately heard the other side of the question, previous to meeting parties in public, or better still, to have shut your ears to what had been proven in your hearing to be utterly without foundation? Are there not such things in the world as wounded self-esteem, and over-weening pride, combined with arrogance, repelling by their offensive prominence in some the food on which they delight—the flattery and applause of men? Might not some of the above amiable qualities, in full bloom, have something to do with the origin of strife in a peaceful community? Yes, Sir, in the above category is to be found the root of bitterness—not in Babel. W. McP.

On the three final resolutions in which the deliverance of the Commission is contained, we have already commented.

We have only to notice the paragraph respecting the opening of the New Church. By this arrangement the Commission became guilty of an act of deliberate and shameful ecclesiastical robbery, of which, in less glaring form, their Church have often been heard loudly accusing others.* It should be known in this case as a warning to congregations like our own, made up of Presbyterians of every name, to beware of deeding their Congregational property to the Presbyterian Church of Canada. For the time may soon come to them, as it has come to us, when they shall bitterly regret such folly, and suffer, as the result of it. All the subscriptions for our Church were given for a Presbyterian Church, which, although to be occupied by a congregation in this connexion, was not necessarily to be permanently connected with it, but would go with the majority in case of a division. But our Faction-leader, advised, it is believed, by some Ministers zealous for the model-trust-deed scheme, which we have been always opposed to, of investing all property to the Synod, on exclusive principles, got the congregation, on a sudden, without knowing what they were about, to agree to a change of this original arrangement, whereby they bound their property to the Synod, and now twenty individuals, and these mostly the censure-deserving faction, carry the Church against all the rest; and observe, that in our case the peaceable majority have paid for a Church which they have never occupied and which the Commissioners of Synod unjustly, ungenerously, and recklessly give to the unworthy few, in opposition to the orderly and conscientious majority. This is a species of ecclesiastical robbery which should brand with infamy all who act in it, for which the supreme Court employing such a commission are bound in honour to make reparation, and from which every member of Synod should dissent, who does not wish to be charged with that from which even heathens vindicated the first ministers of Christianity, (Acts xix, 37.)

The preceding arbitrary, unjust, and tyrannical deliverance, affecting our relation to the Presbyterian Church of Canada, was concluded by a

* Not later than in the Record for August 1850, we have the following notice.

"PERSECUTION.—The adherents of the Scottish Establishment have driven the Rev. Mr. Monroe, of Manchester, (England) and his Congregation, from their Church, which they had built at a cost of about £8000. The prosecutors in this case had not contributed £37 to the building which they have seized, and number only six communicants. Mr. M.'s Congregation, when driven out, amounted to 550. They are now upwards of 600 communicants, worshipping in the Mechanics' Institute. How monstrous, how unhallowed the injustice of exacting such a sacrifice!"

The Free Church of Canada should scarcely expose others for what they do themselves. The scale may be smaller, but the principle is the same. If the case noted was persecution, which we do not deny, they are themselves, by their Commission, in the case of Caledonia, most violent and cruel persecutors.

Commission which had given evidence of utter incapacity for the business assigned them, and which, setting that business aside, proceeded in their mad career to this abrupt and unwarranted issue—disgraceful only to themselves, and of which their own constituents, when they review the matter, must necessarily be ashamed. Was it ever heard of that when disappointed by finding it not true that there was serious division in the congregation, a Commission appointed to enquire into this, instead of rejoicing to find out their mistake, and at finding it unnecessary to do more than bring the disturbers of the Congregation's peace to due subjection and order, should take it upon themselves, in opposition to all reason, justice, and religion, to pretend to vindicate the guilty ringleaders of mischief at the expense of the peaceful congregation, and besides, should take up ground already abandoned by their constituents, and at all events not assigned to them, as an excuse for a deliverance affecting the minister, which although evidently the object of their ambition, was not within the limits of their Commission, and which, supposing it had, was done in a manner not only incapable of satisfactory explanation, but deserving of universal execration? Was it ever known that a Commission of scarcely a quorum of incompetent and partial judges, should cut off a Minister from their connexion for alleged errors on the civil magistrate's powers, which their Synod had passed over after sufficient opportunity of judging, and even do this without specifying in any one particular, the language in which the alleged errors were expressed—when the Minister himself, and the whole Christian public are unable to conjecture what is meant, and when these Commissioners cannot give visible shape to the grounds of their outrageous deliverance? The deliverance is indeed of little consequence except as it affects themselves and the Church for which they acted. To them alone can it be injurious. To many it is the cause of rejoicing. As for us, though we sought it not, yet we shun it not; though we did nothing, so far as is known, to bring it on, yet it is a consummation no way unpleasant, but the reverse. It elevates our standing by freeing us from the trammels of a Church still incapable of enjoying the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and by preparing us for re-joining a Church venerable by age and experience, which has been signally distinguished for purity of doctrine and faithfulness and efficiency in administration, and which probably approaches nearer than any other to the apostolic model. It is thus like the opening of Babylon's gates to enable the captives of Sion, with joy and gladness, to return.

"Upright men shall be astonied at this." For the deliverance of the Commission is one in support of which no specific reason has been given; and for which it is believed no just and competent cause can be assigned. The whole matter was in our being a Scriptural Voluntary, which they knew we always were, and always plainly acknowledged ourselves to be; holding, as we conscientiously do, and have always done the very principles which are held by the whole United Presbyterian Church, not only here, but in Scotland, and in all parts of the world where it is planted, and the principles too of all American Presbyterians, and of almost all evangelical denominations throughout the world; and to shelter themselves from the reproach of enlightened Christendom, they pretend, with consummate arrogance, to find these wholesome principles contrary to the Standards, and even to the Scriptures; and by digressive words they vainly attempt to make them appear very different from what they are. But let the plain and simple language in which they are couched be duly estimated and they will appear, notwithstanding all that has been said and done, to be the very doctrines of Jesus Christ, by refusing which he is wounded in the house of His friends.

In short nothing alleged against us can be proved by them. They

never attempt a proof. They keep by dark mystical insinuations, for which there is no foundation, but they will not condescend to specify. The Popish bulwark of keeping the people in ignorance is their best security, but it is one which cannot protect them long. They indeed state some things, not in our language but in their own, as alleged to be held by us, all of which, however, we deny. They, tell, in the way that best suits their purpose, what they pretend our errors are, but we deny them all, and maintain that we do not hold these errors. Our sentiments are all published on the points of difference. It should certainly be expected that impartial and righteous judges should present these errors in our own words. But this they never venture to do. This they cannot do. Not one of them is able at this moment to shew that we hold any sentiment contrary to the Bible, or even contrary to the Standards when properly understood. They speak of the Headship of Christ as held by us; but were they to report what we say on that subject in our own words, they would be obliged to admit, at any rate the public would see, that our views, and not theirs, are in precise accordance with the Standards, and with the Scriptures.—The fact is, that our exclusion by this Commission is, so far as they can make it, the exclusion of the whole Presbyterian Church of Canada from all practical alliance with enlightened Christendom. It is the concession by themselves, that they and their Church, so far as it shall sanction such a deliverance, are narrow and exclusive in their policy, and in the strongest sense—a Sectarian Church. It is as an attempt to unchurch Christendom, whilst it only unchurches themselves. It is an arrogant assumption, in which none can second them, that they alone "are the people, and that wisdom shall die with them."

In the present state of the Christian world, when the evils of Establishments* are so extensively discovered, and when these, where they exist, are tottering to their fall, it appears most unreasonable and foolish to be contending for the principle, for if the practice be wrong, so must be the principle. One would almost fear that there is in the Free Church still, "a longing, lingering look" for endowments, a hope that the time may come when they, if not exclusively, yet with equal patronage shall enjoy the Government aid in the support of their ministry. On any other supposition we can hardly account for the marvellous tenacity with which they adhere to this their favourite principle.

Entering this Church as we did with all the views we ever had, and still entertain, on the subject of the Magistrate's power as limited by the nature of his office to things civil, and as having no official duties to perform towards the Church, being not only tolerated, but welcomed by the brethren on our own principles, we certainly cannot but look upon all the petty skirmishing they have exhibited on this subject as a wasting of their ammunition in vain. It should surely not be considered wonderful that they could make no impression on our understanding, and that their endeavours, whether by flattery or menace, could no way alter our course. Accustomed as we have been to think differently, and perhaps to attach different meaning to the same words and phrases, born and reared in the atmosphere of Ecclesiastical freedom, is it surprising that their arguments seem fallacious, their reasonings inconclusive, their inferences illegitimate, and their eloquence powerless, in working conviction? It had been better that they had employed their time, and turned their energies on some more hopeful subject. How deeply

* It has been justly said that the Establishment Principle, pregnant with so many evils, is that which has kept the Roman Catholic Church united for Twelve Hundred and Sixty years; and that it is the very same anti-Christian principle which keeps Evangelical Presbyterians from uniting with each other, in our own day. O, when will this ensnaring root of Popery cease to be the instrument of wounding Christ in the house of His friends!

rooted is prejudice! How much more powerful is it than reason itself! And how dogmatically persevering! These veterans of the Establishment Principle would compass sea and land to make one proselyte.

From what has occured we are almost forced to conclude that the principles of Christian forbearance are unknown in the Presbyterian Church, "'Forbearing one another in love.' This one short precept, universally obeyed, would set all right, and reduce all to order. It would not at once reconcile all minds, but it would harmonise all hearts. It would not amalgamate all Churches into an external uniformity, but it would combine them all in the unity of the Spirit, and the bond of peace. It might not hush the voice of controversy, but it would take from it the harsh dissonance of human passion, and cause it to speak in the mellifluous tones of divine charity."*

On Sabbath the 18th of August, when the deliverance of the Commission was known, although not formally announced, a meeting of the Session of Caledonia, and vicinities was called, to be held on Thursday the 22nd current, and thereafter a meeting of the Congregation at Caledonia, meetings at the other stations were also arranged.

"The following minute of recommendations was drawn up by the Session to be submitted to the different stations.

"Being cast out with our Minister† from the Presbyterian Church of Canada, by a decision of this Commission, appearing to us to be arbitrary, unjust, and tyrannical in the extreme, and the grounds of which shall be afterwards more particularly noticed, we consider it our duty as a Session, watching for the spiritual interests of the flock committed to us, to recommend to the Congregation, in its several stations, the following things:—

1.—To regard the procedure of the Commission of Synod as null and void; but at the same time to decline all further connexion with that denomination.

2.—To vindicate themselves by a public exposure and condemnation of the Commission's procedures.

3.—To seek connexion, as soon as possible, with another denomination, that we may enjoy their protection and fostering care.

4.—To consider how far it might be expedient to apply for admission into the United Presbyterian Church.

And, 5.—To appoint a Committee to carry out the views of the Congregation, and reduce them to practice.

The various Stations having met, they all unanimously agreed to adopt the foregoing recommendations, and a Committee was appointed of persons from all the Stations to carry out the views of the Congregation.

This Committee consisted of seventeen persons. Twelve of these, on the 24th September, 1850, appeared at the Bar of the Presbytery of Hamilton, in connexion with United Presbyterian Church, and in the name, and by the appointment of three Congregations, and two Stations, included in the general Congregation of Caledonia and vicinities, presented a respectful petition to be received as Minister and people into fellowship with that Church.

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* The Rev. John Angell James' Essay on Union.

† Such was the view taken of the Commission's deliverance by the people themselves. It was the only ingredient of lenity in the procedures of this Commission. "We respect," says Dr. Burns, announcing the result to us, "as it becomes us, the attachment of your office-bearers and members to you, as their beloved and faithful Pastor, and we have done nothing that may interfere with the ties which unite them and you together. This, however, cannot well be reconciled with zealous endeavours, afterwards put forth, to divide those settlements where there is not scope for two opposing stations.

The Presbytery, with much wisdom and kindness, considered the application—heard with patience all the Commissioners—put various questions to them, to which suitable answers were returned, and then expressed their own sentiments. After weighing the whole case with seriousness and deliberation, the Presbytery unanimously and cordially agreed to receive Dr. Ferrier and his Congregation into fellowship with their Church. They then gave the right hand of Christian fellowship to the Minister and the representatives of the Congregation, and finally appointed two Ministers, one for the first, and the other for the second Sabbath, to announce their deliverance at the different Congregations and Stations, and to declare them received into the United Presbyterian Church.

Those Commissioners who were at this Presbyery, and had also been at the Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the month of May, and who besides, had witnessed the proceedings of the Commission at Caledonia, could not fail to mark the contrast between the Presbytery by which they were now received, and the Courts from which they have been excluded. It was like the unruffled calm after the furious tempest. From being treated with harshness, injustice and disrespect, by those from whom they had sought and had a right to expect, to be protected and vindicated, they now found an honourable Court which would take no advantage of the others, but weighed the whole matter with scrutiny, with impartiality, and with affectionate wisdom, and after a thorough and patient investigation, gave it as their deliberate and unanimous voice, that we should be cordially admitted.

The United Presbyterian Congregation of Caledonia and vicinities is now our designation: and we shall never forget the overpowering emotion of delight we felt when our beloved Commissioners, after being kindly recognized by this Presbytery, spontaneously turned to their Minister and affectionately congratulated him on being restored to the Church of his fathers and of his fathers' fathers.

The United Presbyterian Congregation at Caledonia have now to express their gratitude to those gentlemen and friends in the neighbourhood and elsewhere, who have, by spontaneous offers of sites, and materials, and money, put it in their power to proceed, without delay, to the erection of a commodious place of worship; in the progress and completion of which they are hopeful that, from the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed, as they will require, so will they obtain the countenance and aid of Christian friends.

They rejoice in their deliverance from trouble and from troublers, and whilst they would bear no grudge to those who have forsaken them, but would rather rejoice in their spiritual welfare, they trust that being now blessed with the enjoyment of perfect tranquillity among themselves, they will henceforward, through grace, continue to be of one mind, and to live in peace, and that the God of peace shall be with them.

Our narrative is ended. We regret to have had so much to say that is no way creditable to Courts of the Presbyterian Church. We do not attach blame to the Presbyterian Church at large, or to its supreme court unless it homologate what its Commission have done. This they will perhaps not venture to do, unless, as one of their ministers told them last year, they mean to "make themselves odious wherever it is heard, over the whole of Christendom." One of the members of our own congregation, devoted to the Free Church, but who, from the outrageous deliverance of its Commission has bid them adieu, has said, and we trust he is correct in saying, in reference to the Commission's procedure,—"This is not the doing of the Free Church; they would never do such a thing; it is the doing of individuals who are now carrying matters wtih a high hand among them, but whose conduct, when detested by the

Supreme Court, whose undue confidence in them they have much abused, must meet with decided and strong condemnation."*

We have cause to bless the Lord for making this Commission the instruments of good to us, and so many of our people, in leading us to a Church not nominally but really Free; a revolution which we had not anticipated, but which we cannot but regard, after all we have seen, as one of the happiest incidents of our life. We are now among brethren whose sentiments and feelings are similar to our own, and with whom we can co-operate without the slightest restraint, and with the delightful consciousness of seeking in unity of mind and heart, the glory of Christ, and the best interest of the souls of men.

It is painful, however, to think that so small a difference should separate two Churches which are one in everything else, and especially that the Presbyterian Church should create so great a noise about a point on which forbearance seems not only to be indispensible, but to be obviously incumbent, and easily practicable. If, however, on this point we must differ, "Let us differ on this side the grave, as those who look for speedy and perfect unity beyond it; and standing upon the beach, not make too much of ripples in the sand, which the first wave of the eternal ocean will sweep into utter and everlasting oblivion."†

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* We are of the same opinion with our friend, for the noble stand made by the Free Church has always had our high admiration. But it must be acknowledged, that if such proceedings as are described in this Tract are to be practised in any of her Courts, and especially if they are sanctioned by the Supreme Court of the Presbyterian Church of Canada when it meets next year, they lay themselves open to the censure of all consistent and serious Christians; nay, if such conduct is not condemned by their Synod, the enlightened Christian Public must necessarily make such observations as the following:—

1.—That this Presbyterian Church of Canada acts a most inconsistent part, as she is battening on the Voluntary Principle, and at the same time denouncing it, by expelling from her communion men for clinging to it as a scriptural principle;

2.—That by so doing this Church offers insult to the Christian people in her communion who are able and willing to support the gospel ministry, by virtually telling them that an appeal to their liberality is only a dernier resort; that were the civil government to its duty, this liberality would be a work of supererogation, as the Ministry would be supported by funds extorted from all and sundry. Will the Christian people really submit to be thus trifled with and insulted? Will they continue to give voluntarily what their ecclesiastical rulers say should be obtained by compulsion? And

3.—That now those Members of the Free Church who hold the Voluntary principle and they are numerous, must feel their position to be painfully incongruous, and altogether incompatible with their honourable and scriptural principles. It is therefore surely high time that they search anew for the path of duty as regards this matter.

† Lectures by D. King, L. L. D., in reply to Dr. Chalmers on Church Extension.

Dr. Burns' letter was not given in the first Edition, which some of our friends regretted. It was not forwarded in time to be presented on page 42 of this Edition. The following is a copy:—

TORONTO, 8th August, 1850.

MY DEAR SIR.—In case of any mistake I beg to say that your presence at the meeting in Hamilton on the 13th, is expected, or if this is not convenient, a few lines from you which may be laid before the Commissioners, will serve nearly the same purpose.

The object of the meeting is to take a deliberate review of the whole matter, and particularly of what passed at Caledonia, and to come to some judgment which may be final. May ALMIGHTY WISDOM direct you and us.

MY DEAR SIR, with best wishes for yourself and family,

ever yours,

ROBERT BURNS.

APPENDIX.

It is our intention in a short Appendix to disabuse a portion of the public mind from false impressions which have been produced by hasty statements in some quarters where silence would be more becoming, as to the real state of the United Presbyterian Congregation of Caledonia and Vicinities. Our former friends, through their various advocates, boast of their numbers, and of their triumphs, and would wish to make the world believe they had succeeded to "blot out our name from under heaven." Let them boast. We have not taken the trouble to contradict them, nor have we ever interfered with their endeavours and their interests here in the slightest degree, although they have carried their misrepresentations into every hamlet in this region, besides sounding their slanders throughout the length and breadth of the land. We have been proceeding all along in our usual way of noiseless diligence, as if nothing had taken place; and by the revolution in ecclesiastical connexion we have, through the blessing of God, not been injured but benefited, and have had great cause of rejoicing. We have observed a sacred silence as to the motives, the movements, and the prospects of our former friends in the midst of us. We envy them not: we bear them no grudge: and we would not degrade ourselves by imitating them or their agents in the utterance of falsehood, or in any dishonourable means of maintaining our cause. Ours is the cause of truth, of religion, of Christ. It needs not carnal weapons for its defence, nor the tongue of calumny to promote its extention. It requires nothing but candid hearing from others, and the calm, and constant, and persevering improvement, on our part, of the usual means of grace to secure its safety, its prosperity, and its triumph. Some, indeed, and among these some whom we did not expect, have deserted our Standard. But others have taken, and many more are about to take their place. In January last when our statistics were made up for the Presbytery we were only twenty-three communicants short of what we had before the division, since that time we have been steadily progressing and we are stronger now than ever. We feel too that we are in a much better working condition than at any prior period, and that Providence is opening the field for us by unexpected facilities, and with prospects of great increase. We only hope and pray that in spiritual health and prosperity our progress may correspond. The whole charge is already too weighty for ourselves. But in the meantime, "having obtained help of God, we continue unto this day witnessing both to small and great."

We have cause to express our thanks to a kind Providence, that although we have been unjustly robbed of the Church at Caledonia, yet by our own exertions and the aid of friends we have the prospect of getting another, equally commodious, erected in its place. Providence has also given us, as the decided majority, the New Church in the Township of Ancaster, where our prospects are good. In Oneida we have no Church as yet; but there our hands have been strengthened by the unexpected and seasonable bequest, already known to many, of the late patriotic and liberal minded David Thompson, Esq. M.P.P., who has given us the elegant place of worship recently erected by himself in Indiana, which in honour of the lamented donor is called—THOMPSON CHURCH, and which is forthwith to be occupied by our members and adherents, in and around that place, who have been already organized by the Presbytery into a distinct Congregation with encouraging prospects of success. "Verily the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

Dr Burns' "restless iron tongue" is out upon us once more in the March Record. He seems to be incapable of speaking or writing anything on this subject that is true. For the present we leave him to others who may perhaps animadvert on some of his statements. When he comes forward in a discreet and candid manner, although he may be as much under mistake as in the paper referred to, we may think of answering him. Under his present delusions it would be wiser for him to look to his own concerns, and let ours alone. By making foolish and causeless aggressions abroad, he may endanger the peace and safety of his own citadel, and may require on a sudden to be re-called,—like Saul on one occasion in the pursuit of David when a messenger came to him saying, "Haste thee, and come for the Philistines have invaded the land."

On the whole we would say that the position of the Free Church, in this Country, in their rigid adherence to the Standards, where the Standards teach intolerant and persecuting principles, is one on which it is impossible they can long continue; and the sooner they renounce it the better for themselves. After all it is not a real but a nominal adherence that they make; and as soon as a few ministers of cool and deliberate judgment, free from the prejudices of education and of party, and of sterling rectitude and honour, with sufficient firmness, boldness, and enterprise, shall rise up among them, they must either renounce their position, or divide their church. May the Lord over-rule this and everything else for the benefit of religion, and for His own glory.

We have only further to express our thanks to various Editors of Newspapers for the favourable notices they have taken of our Pamphlet, and of our cause. This cause, however, was neither begun, nor will it end, with us, and is therefore one which they may still be honoured to advance. It is the cause of unfettered, pure, and scriptural christianity. Its triumph is necessary, certain, is approaching; and when completed we shall all be privileged, with feelings of celestial joy, to "look upon Zion the city of our solemnities: our eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down, not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken."

ERRATA.

(From the hurry of the Press and the absence of the Author, the following have occurred, which the reader will please to correct.)

Page 4, line 8, for "indurable," read "incurable."
—— 13, — 1 of Note, for "possibly," read "principle."
—— 15, — 12, from foot of Note, insert "besides," after "because."
—— 30, — 20, for "reasonably," read "reasonable."
—— 33, — 26, from foot of foot Note, for "in all its acts," read "all its acts."
—— 36, — 15 and 16, from foot, for "without entering on the object for which the Commision was sent," read "whilst the Commission had never entered on the object for which they were sent."
—— 40, — 10, for "Commissioner's," read "Commissioners'."
—— 40, —— foot Note, for "p. 20," read "p.p. 21, 22."
—— 41, — 1, for "opinion," read "opinions."
—— 41, — 25, for "the sages," read "these passages."
—— 44, — 17, for "elict," read "elicit."

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